

Poet Lore

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THE SMUG CITIZEN¹

Scenes in the House of Bezsemenov

A Dramatic Sketch in Four Acts.

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Translated by Edwin Hopkins²

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ: In the order in which they first appear

TATIANA, a school teacher, daughter of BEZSEME NOV, 28 years old.

POLJA, daughter of PERTSCHICHIN, a seamstress, works by the day at BEZSEME NOV'S house, 21.

PETER, TATIANA'S brother, a suspended student, 26.

BEZSEME NOV, WASSILI WASSILYEVICH, wealthy, chairman of the painter's guild, 58.

AKOOLINA IVANOVNA, his wife, 52.

STEPANIDA, a cook.

PERTSCHICHIN, a distant relative of BEZSEME NOV, dealer in song birds, 50.

TETEREV, a choir singer, lives at BEZSEME NOV'S house.

HELENA, NIKOLAHYEVNA KRIVZOVA, widow of a prison inspector, tenant at BEZSEME NOV'S, 24.

NIL, foster son of BEZSEME NOV, a locomotive engineer, 27.

ZWETAHYEVA, a teacher, friend of TATIANA, 25.

SCHISHKIN, a student, lives at BEZSEME NOV'S house.

A woman passer by, a painter's apprentice, a woman, a man, a doctor, an old man.

Various people from the street.

PLACE OF THE ACTION: A small city in the provinces.

ACT I

Living room in home of a prosperous burgess. In the left corner (of one facing the audience) a small partitioned alcove, the entrance a wooden

¹ Literally, *Burgesses*, signifying members of the third Russian estate (Clergy, Nobility and *Burgesses*), with the additional meaning expressed by provincials or bourgeoisie.

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archway with gaudy curtains hung on a wire. At the rear of the main room, a door to the hall, along which are the rooms of the tenants and the kitchen. On the right of the door, a huge sideboard, in the corner a chest, and against the right wall on a bamboo table, an old fashioned hall clock, whose great moon-like pendulum, behind the glass bell, swings slowly back and forth, its soulless tick tock, tick tock clearly audible in the stillness of the room.* In the right wall are two doors, one to PETER'S room and the other to the room of his parents. Between the doors a Dutch tile stove and immediately before it, a flat sofa covered with oil cloth. In the centre of the room is a great table used for dining and tea drinking. Cheap Vienna chairs are placed about the room in disgusting regularity. Against the wall, below the doors, is a glass cabinet filled with vari-colored boxes, Easter eggs, bronze candlesticks, tea and table spoons with a few glass and silver wine-glasses. In the alcove a piano, a music stand and a philodendron plant. Flowers cover the sills of the two windows on the left. A couch is between these windows and near the couch a small table.

It is almost evening about five o'clock, and autumnal dusk has fallen. The room is nearly dark. TATIANA, reclining on the couch, reads from a book, and POLJA at the little table, is sewing.

Tatiana (reading). The moon was rising, and it was strange to see how so small and sad an object could shed so soft a flood of silver blue radiance upon the earth. (*Throws the book into her lap*). It is dark...

Polja. Shall I light the lamp?

Tatiana. No, never mind. I am tired of reading.

Polja. How well written! So simple, so pathetic. . . It tortures the heart. (*Pause*). I am anxious to know how it ends. Whether they marry or not.

Tatiana (annoyed). What does that matter?

Polja. I could not fall in love with such a man—no!

Tatiana. Why?

Polja. He is so tiresome . . . so complaining . . . seems to have no object in life. . . A man must know what he has to do with himself.

Tatiana (softly). And. . . Nil—does he know?

Polja (confidently). Certainly.

Tatiana. What does he know?

Polja. I cannot describe it all as simply as he does, but the unworthy, the malicious, the greedy—will always fare badly at his hands. He has little patience with them.

Tatiana. Who is evil? And who—good?

Polja. He knows! (*TATIANA is silent and pays no attention to*

* The Russian clock-words have an additional meaning: yes, so; yes, so it is, or so it must always be.

POLJA *as she smilingly takes the book from TATIANA's lap*). So well written. How attractive she is . . . so direct, . . . simple, affectionate. When you see a woman drawn in so loving an image, you seem better for it yourself.

Tatiana. How naive. . . You are funny, Polja. . . This only angers me. There was never such a girl, nor such estates, nor such a river, nor such moons. . . It never was; it is all invented. . . Life is never shown in books as it really is. . . We for example, you and I. . .

Polja. They only try to show the interesting things. . . And what is there of interest in our lives?

Tatiana (*without attending, annoyed*). I often feel that books are written by people who have some animosity for me . . . who want to dispute with me . . . as though they would say, that it is better than you think and that—worse.

Polja. To me all story writers necessarily seem good. . . I should like to see a story writer once.

Tatiana (*as if to herself*). Life's evil and repulsive phases are not shown as I see them . . . but in a different way . . . in larger spaces . . . in tragic tone . . . and the good is only fiction. Nobody declares his love as they write of it in books. . . And life throughout is not tragic. It flows softly, monotonously by, like a great, muddy river, and while you watch it flowing, your eyes become wearied, your head dull and you do not even want to think what the stream is flowing for.

Polja (*pensively*). No, but I should like to see a story writer once. While you were reading, I was wondering, how does he look? Is he young, or old? Fair or dark?

Tatiana. Who?

Polja. The author . . . that wrote it.

Tatiana. He is dead.

Polja. Ah, what a pity. Long ago? Young?

Tatiana. In middle age. He was drowned—in whiskey.

Polja. The poor fellow. . . (*Pause*). Why do talented people drink whiskey? Our tenants, for instance the choir singer . . . he is a talented man, but he drinks. Why is it?

Tatiana. Life is so trite.

Peter (*just awakened, enters from his room*). How dark! Who is sitting there?

Polja. I . . . and Tatiana Wassilyevna.

Peter. Why don't you light a lamp?

Polja. We would rather sit in the dark.

Peter. My room smells of oil, from the old folks' lamp. That must have been the cause of my dream. . . I was swimming in a river and the water was as thick as axle grease . . . heroic swimming and I didn't even

know where to try to go. . I could not see the shore. Drift-wood was floating against me, but when I took hold of it, the stuff became rotten and crumbled. (*Strides up and down the room, whistling*). It is time for tea.

Polja (*lights a lamp*). I'll get it. (*Exit*).

Peter. Evenings here with us are unbearably dull . . and gloomy. All this furniture out of the ark grows larger and heavier. . takes up all the breathing space. (*Knocks on the sideboard*). This sideboard has been standing in this one spot for eighteen years . . eighteen years . . they say that life is moving more swiftly by. . but life has not budged this property one inch. . . How often as a boy have I knocked my head against its sharp corners . . and it is still in the way . . even yet . . a stupid chest. . it is no sideboard, but a kind of symbol. The devil take it.

Tatiana. How tiresome you are, Peter. It is harmful. . thus.

Peter. How, thus?

Tatiana. You go nowhere . . except you sit upstairs with Lena, night after night. . and that distresses the old folks.

Peter (*without answering, walks about, whistling*).

Tatiana. You know. . I begin to be so tired. In school the noise and disorder weary me. . and here—the order and stillness. Although things go better since Lena has been in the house. Yes, I am worn out, and the holidays are still a long way off. . November . . December. . . (*The clock strikes six.*)

Bezsemenov (*sticks his head out of his room*). The Cossacks are whistling. Of course you have not written the brief.

Peter. Of course! Of course I have.

Bezsemenov. So—you have really found a little time . . ha, ha! (*Disappears.*)

Tatiana. What brief?

Peter. We are suing Merchant Sezov for seventeen rubles and fifty copecs for painting a barn roof.

Akoolina Ivanovna (*enters with a lamp*). It is raining again outdoors. (*Goes to the sideboard, gets out dishes and sets the table*): I don't know why it stays so cold in here. We lit the stove but still it is not warm. The house is old and the wind blows through and through—hu—u! And your father is worse again to-day, dears. The rheumatism is in his stomach another time. He is an old man . . always having bad luck. . disorders . . big expenses . . cares.

Tatiana (*to her brother*). Were you in Lena's room yesterday?

Peter. Yes.

Tatiana. Was it lively there?

Peter. As ever . . we had tea . . sang . . argued.

Tatiana. With whom?

Peter. I, with Nil and Schishkin.

Tatiana. As usual.

Peter. Yes, Nil again the mad optimist. He makes me furious with his eternal preaching . . . the way he breaks into psalms about the quickness of life, the ecstasy of living. . . laughable. Listen to him and he will picture a wonderful life unknown to the wisest. He talks as though he had an American aunt who might shuffle off the next moment and leave him a million. . . Schishkin had a sermon on the usefulness of milk and the harmfulness of tobacco. . . And he was accusing me in addition of thinking like a bourgeois.

Tatiana. Always the same.

Peter. Yes, just the same.

Tatiana. Tell me, do you like Lena?

Peter. She is good—and lively.

Akoolina Ivanovna. She is gossipy! A whirligig, a senseless thing. Every God's blessed day, company, sugar and tea . . . dancing and singing . . . and she has not bought that washstand yet but washes herself in a tin wash basin and wets the floor all up . . . makes the house rotten.

Tatiana (to PETER). I was at the club last night, to spend the evening. Alderman Ssomov, the curator of my school hardly recognized me . . . indeed, and when Judge Romanov's mistress came into the hall, he rushed to greet her, bowed as though she were the governor's wife, and kissed her hand. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. The shameless scamp. Instead of taking an honest girl's arm and showing his respect for her publicly . . .

Tatiana (to her brother). No. In the eyes of such people, a teacher deserves less respect than such a lewd, painted woman.

Peter. It is not worth noticing . . . we should hold ourselves higher . . . she may be lewd but she is not painted.

Akoolina Ivanovna. How do you know that? Have you licked her cheeks? Your sister has been insulted and you excuse the offender.

Peter. Mama! Hasn't enough been said?

Tatiana. No. When mama is here, nobody else can speak a word. (*Behind the hall door heavy footsteps are heard.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna. Don't be getting excited. You, Peter, had better be bringing in the samovar instead of counting steps. . . Stepanida is always complaining, it is too heavy she says.

Stepanida (brings the samovar in, puts it on the floor near the table and gasps for breath as she straightens up. To AKOOLINA.) You may do as you please, but I tell you once more I haven't the strength for such a devil as that. My legs are caving in.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Do you want me to hire somebody special for this?

Stepanida. As you like. Let the choir singer carry it in. It would

be no hurt to him. Peter Wassilyevich, put the samovar on the table. Honest, I can't do it.

Peter. All right . . . Ah!

Stepanida. Thanks! Thanks! (*Exit.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna. . . . She is quite right, Petja. Tell the singer that he must bring the samovar in. Tell him. . .

Tatiana (*sighs in distress*). Ah my God!

Peter. Don't you think I had better tell him also to bring the water, scrub the floor, sweep the chimney and do the washing?

Akoolina Ivanovna (*with a spiteful motion at PETER*). That is all being done without him. . . and as to the samovar. . .

Peter. . . . *Mama!* Every evening you bring this same fatal question up—the question, who shall bring the samovar in. I don't think it will ever be solved until you hire a chore boy.

Akoolina Ivanovna. What! Nonsense, we need no chore boy. Father does himself all that's necessary about the house.

Peter. And that is called stinginess . . . which does not look well for a man with money in the bank.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Pst! Be still. If your father hears you he will tell you what a bank is. Did you put the money in the bank?

Peter. Listen, mama!

Tatiana (*springing up*). Petja, you at least ought . . . one loses patience.

Peter (*goes to her*). Stop crying. We get into these discussions before we notice it ourselves.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Groaning again! Your own mother is not allowed to get in a word edgewise.

Peter. Day after day—always the same. This incessant quarreling collects a thick rust at the bottom of one's heart. . . .

Akoolina Ivanovna, (*calls into her room*). Father, will you have tea?

Peter. As soon as my suspension is through with I am going back to the university at Moscow again. Then I'll come home, at the oftenest, once a year for a week, as I used to do. In my three years of university life, I forgot home, all this meanness, this complaining, this bourgeois bustle. It is good to be alone, far away from the bliss of the paternal roof.

Tatiana. And I have no place to get away to.

Peter. Take a course.

Tatiana. What use is college to me? I want to live, not to study. . . do you understand that?

Akoolina Ivanovna, (*takes the tea can from the samovar, burning her fingers and crying out*). May the boggy man catch you!

Tatiana. I cannot picture to myself what it would be to live or how to live. . . nor imagine myself detached from these surroundings.

Peter, (thoughtfully). Hm—yes, life must be lived knowingly, understandingly.

Bezsemenov, (enters from his room, casting a glance at his children and takes his place at the table). Have you called the boarders?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Petja, call them. (*Exit PETER, TATIANA goes to the table.*)

Bezsemenov. You have bought lump sugar again. How often have I told you. . .

Tatiana. Does it make any difference?

Bezsemenov. I am not talking to you but to your mother, to you, I know, it is all the same.

Akoolina Ivanovna. I only bought a pound of it, father. There is still a whole cone of the other left, but there was no time to split it up. . . don't get angry.

Bezsemenov. I am not getting angry. I only say, lump sugar is heavy and not sweet. Consequently, it is unprofitable to buy such sugar. Sugar must always be bought in the cone, and brought home and broken up. That makes crumbs but they can be used in cooking. Such sugar is light and sweet. (*To TATIANA.*) What are you wrinkling your forehead and sighing for again?

Tatiana. Nothing. . nothing. . only. . only. . .

Bezsemenov. When there is nothing then there is nothing to sigh about. Do you find it so painful when your father has a word to say? I don't speak on my own account, but for your good, my young people. We have lived out our time, but you are just beginning to live. To look at you one cannot understand what you are really going to do with your life. What intentions have you? Our order here does not please you; we see that, and feel it, but what sort of an order have you thought out? That is the question. Hm. . yes.

Tatiana. Father! How often you have repeated all this.

Bezsemenov. And I will repeat it again and again until I am dead. You distress me, you add to my troubles. In vain I gave you an education. I should have thought better of it. It all comes to this, that Peter is suspended from the university and you—are getting to be an old maid.

Tatiana. I. . I. . .

Bezsemenov. I know, I know! But what use is your work to anybody? Your twenty-five rubles a month—nobody needs it, not even you yourself. Go marry, live as one ought to—and I will pay you fifty rubles a month myself

Akoolina Ivanovna, (rocks uneasily on her chair during the conversation between father and daughter, tries to get in a word, and finally asks tenderly): Father wouldn't you like some cheese cakes? Some were left over from dinner. . hm?

Bezsemenov, (turns to her angrily, but smiles in his beard.) Well, bring in your cheese cakes. . bring them in, ha! ha!

Akoolina Ivanovna, (hurries busily to the sideboard).

Bezsemenov. Just look what good care your mother takes of you, like a duck guarding her young ones from a dog. . always trembling with fear lest I hurt you with a word. . . Ah, our birdler, finally here again, you stranger.

Pertshichin, (appears in the doorway, followed softly by Polja). Peace to this household, to the graybearded master, to the beautiful house wife, to their kind children, eternal peace.

Bezsemenov. So you have had another whiskey?

Pertshichin. Driven to it by grief!

Bezsemenov. Grief?

Pertshichin, (shaking hands with them one by one). I sold the chaffinch today. . . I have had the bird three years. . it could sing the Tyrolien thrill, and now I have thrown it away. I felt that I was a dishonest beast when I did it. I am sorry, I was used to having it about, I loved it.

Polja, (nods to her father smilingly).

Bezsemenov. Why did you sell it?

Pertshichin, (goes around the table, supporting himself on the backs of the chairs). I was given a good price.

Akoolina Ivanovna. What do you want with the money? You will only squander it.

Pertshichin (smiling). True, mother, money is no good to me.

Bezsemenov. Anyway, there was no reason to sell it.

Pertshichin. Yes, yes, I had a reason. It was half blind, the poor creature. . and couldn't have lived much longer, either.

Bezsemenov (laughs). Oh ho! So you are not such a fool after all.

Pertshichin. You think I did it out of prudence. No, only the baseness of my nature. . . (PETER and TETEREV enter.)

Tatiana. And where is Nil?

Peter. He has gone to the rehearsal with Schishkin.

Bezsemenov. Where do they want to play?

Peter. At the riding academy. A performance for the soldiers.

Pertshichin (to TETEREV). To the flute of God—my respects. Shall we go titmouse catching together, uncle?

Teterov. Yes, but when?

Pertshichin. Tomorrow even.

Teterov. I cannot. I have a funeral on.

Pertshichin. Early then, before the services.

Teterov. All right, come for me. Akoolina Ivanovna, is there nothing left over from dinner, no hash, or anything of the kind?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Yes father, there is something. Polja, bring it in. (*Exit POLJA.*)

Teterev. Thanks, thanks. As you know I didn't get any dinner to-day. Had a funeral and a wedding.

Akoolina Ivanovna. I know, I know. . (*PETER takes a glass of tea and goes with it in his hand to the alcove. BEZSEMENOV follows him with an inquiring look and TETEREV, ominously. A pause, they eat and drink in silence.*)

Bezsemenov. You are doing well this month, Terentey Chrisanfovich, a corpse almost every day.

Teterev. Luck runs that way. . no fault of mine.

Bezsemenov. And weddings are frequent, too.

Teterev. Yes, they marry with zeal.

Bezsemenov. Save a little sock of money and marry yourself.

Teterev. I don't feel like it.

Tatiana (*goes to her brother and converses with him in low tones*).

Pertshichin. Don't marry, you don't have to. Marriage is not for such odd chaps as you and I. Chaffinch hunting is better.

Teterev. I'm willing.

Pertshichin. Chaffinch hunting, that is sport for gentlemen. When a fresh snow has fallen and the earth is adorned with lace, like an Easter-gown, everywhere purity, brilliancy, soft stillness, and then if the sun breaks through, the soul cries out for joy. The autumn trees are still magnificent in their golden colors, their limbs powdered with the silver snow. And suddenly, in the midst of this splendor, gurdy, gurdy, from the clear sky a swarm of red birds plunge down—zwee, zwee, zwee, like a poppy field in bloom. Such neat little chaps, as solemn as generals. They walk about, growling and cooing . . beautiful! I would enjoy it if I could be a chaffinch, jumping around in the snow with them. . ah!

Bezsemenov. A fool bird, the chaffinch.

Pertshichin. Then I am a fool.

Teterev. Well said.

Akoolina Ivanovna (*to PERTSHICHIN*). You are a baby.

Pertshichin. I love to catch the little birds. In the whole world what is more beautiful than a song-bird?

Bezsemenov. But it is sinful to catch birds. You know that.

Pertshichin. I know that, but if I like it, and can't do anything else? Love of work sanctifies it.

Bezsemenov. Any and every occupation?

Pertshichin. Yes, any.

Bezsemenov. And if, for instance, somebody loves to pocket other people's property?

Pertshichin. That cannot be called an occupation, that is theft.

Bezsemenov. Hm . . rather.

Akoolina Ivanovna (yawns). O—oh. Why do I always feel so bored? Bring your guitar and play us something, Terently Chisanfovich!

Teterev. When I rented my room, respected Akoolina Ivanovna, I did not contract to entertain you. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (without having understood him.) How do you say?

Teterev. Loud and distinctly.

Bezsemenov (astonished, spitefully). When I look at you Terentey Chisanfovich, I am astonished always. Pardon the expression, but you are a lamentable good-for-nothing, and as full of pride as a nobleman. Where does it come from?

Teterev (quietly). It was born in me. . .

Bezsemenov. Then for God's sake tell me *what* you are so proud of?

Akoolina Ivanovna. He is fooling. What can he have pride about?

Tatiana. Mama!

Akoolina Ivanovna (starts). What? Did you say anything?

Tatiana (shakes her head reprovingly).

Akoolina Ivanovna. Have I said something improper again? I won't say anything at all. . . God be with you!

Bezsemenov (hurt). You, mother, be more careful. We are living here with educated people. They are able to criticise everything from the point of view of science and superintelligence. You and I are only two old foolish people. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (good naturedly). Well, well, they know all about it.

Pertshichin. True, brother, you spoke in jest, but it is true.

Bezsemenov. I did not speak in jest.

Pertshichin. Wait! Old people are really foolish people.

Bezsemenov. If anybody judges them by you, yes.

Pertshichin. I am not being counted in. But my opinion is this: that if there were no more old people there would be no more foolish people. When an old man thinks, it is like wet wood burning, more fog than fire.

Teterev (smiling). Right, I say. (*POLJA strokes her father's shoulders, looking at him in silence.*)

Bezsemenov (gloomily to PERTSHICHIN). So, so, more chattering.

PETER and TATIANA interrupt their conversation and smile at PERTSHICHIN.)

Pertshichin (in excited tones). Old people are stubborn. An old man when he makes a mistake and feels that he does not understand will never confess. His pride will not permit it. Has he not lived long, has he not worn out perhaps forty pairs of trousers, and shall he suddenly cease to understand things? Impossible. That would be an insult. So he

repeats, parrot like, I am old, I am right. How can he be right, his reason is dull, while with younger people the head is quick and clear.

Bezsemenov (rudely). You're crazy. You tell me: If we were so foolish we should get someone to instruct us.

Pertshichin. Who would? Like shooting arrows at a stone wall they would only be wasted.

Bezsemenov. Wait. Don't interrupt me. I am older than you. I want to ask, why do your bright quick intelligences scatter in every direction, making faces at us old people, instead of teaching us? Think that over . . . and I will too, . . . alone in my room . . . if I am too stupid for your society . . . (*Gets noisily out of his chair and goes to the door of his room.*) My educated children. . . (*Pause.*)

Pertshichin (to PETER and TATIANA). Children, why have you hurt him so?

Polja (smiling). It is you who have insulted him. . .

Pertshichin. I? In all my life I have never insulted anybody.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Ah my dears! Why did you insult your poor father? You are all so gloomy, so dissatisfied . . . and he is old, he needs rest. . . You must show him respect . . . he is your father. I will go to him. (*To POLJA.*) Pelagia, wash up the dishes. . .

Tatiana (goes to the table). Why is father so wrought up over us?

Akoolina Ivanovna (in the door). Keep out of his way . . . you educated daughter. (*POLJA washes the tea things. TETEREV at the table supports himself on his elbows and stares at her vacantly. PERTSHICHIN goes over to PETER, and sits at his side. TATIANA slowly enters her room.*)

Polja (to TETEREV). Why are you staring at me so?

Teterev. Because. . .

Pertshichin (to PETER). What are you thinking about, Petya?

Peter. Where shall I go? . . .

Pertshichin. For a long time I have wanted to ask you, what is sanitation.

Peter. What do you want to know for? To make it perfectly clear would take a long time . . . and be tiresome. . .

Pertshichin. But do you know?

Peter. I do.

Pertshichin (looks PETER in the face, unbelievably). Hm!

Polja (washing the dishes). How late Nil Wassilyevich is to-day.

Teterev. What beautiful eyes you have.

Polja. So you said yesterday.

Teterev. And to-morrow I will say it again.

Polja. Why?

Teterev. I don't know. . . You think maybe, that I am in love with you.

Polja. You, my Lord! I think nothing.

Teterev. Nothing, that is bad. You had better think. . .

Polja. What about?

Teterev. Oh perhaps, why I am always talking to you. Think it over and tell me why.

Polja. What an odd fellow you are.

Teterev. I know it. You have told me so before. And I repeat as I have said before, make a change. It does you no good to stay here in this house . . . leave it, go.

Peter. You are making love? Hadn't I better go out?

Teterev. No, don't trouble yourself. You are only lifeless furniture.

Peter. That was not very witty. . .

Polja (to Teterev). What a fighting cock you are.

Teterev (steps to one side and listens attentively to the conversation between PETER and PERTSHICHIN).

Tatiana (enters from her room, pulling a shawl over her shoulders, sits at the piano and looks through the music). Hasn't Nil come yet?

Polja. No. . .

Pertshichin. It is tiresome. Say Petja: I have lately read in the papers, that they are building flying ships in England. A whole ship as it is, so that when you get into it and press a button, it flies skyward like a bird and carries the man away, nobody knows where. And lots of Englishmen have been lost forever in this way. Is it true?

Peter. It is nonsense.

Pertshichin. There it was in cold type.

Peter. Many nonsensical things are put into type.

Pertshichin. Many?

Tatiana (plays softly a sad melody).

Peter (angrily). Naturally, many, much.

Pertshichin. Don't get angry. Why are you young people always so lofty with us even if we are old and played out? Won't even talk with us. That is not good.

Peter. Say more.

Pertshichin. I'll say this much more: that I see I must get away from here. I disgust you! *Polja*, are you going soon?

Polja. As soon as I get through. (*Leaves the room, TETEREV'S eyes following her.*)

Pertshichin. Hm. . . yes. You have already forgotten, Petja, how we used to catch redwings together. You were fond of me then.

Peter. And still I am.

Pertshichin. I see and feel how well you are.

Peter. I loved candy and cough drops then but I don't like such things now.

Pertshichin. I understand. . . Uncle Terentey—shall we have a glass of beer?

Teterev. I don't feel like it.

Pertshichin. I will go alone. Everything is fine in the saloon—unconstrained. A man would die here of the monotony—so. Don't feel insulted at my plain speaking, you have no aspirations. . . Let's play cards . . . just four of us here. . .

Teterev (looks at PETER and smiles).

Pertshichin. Don't want to? As you will . . . good bye! (*Goes to TETEREV and snaps him on the neck**). Shall we go?

Teterev. No. . . (*Exit PERTSHICHIN with a hopeless gesture. A profound silence. . . The soft notes of the air which Tatiana is slowly playing are distinctly heard. PETER lies down on the couch, listens and accompanies the melody with whistling. TETEREV rises and paces the room. In the hall behind the door a metal object, a bucket or the top of the samovar falls on the floor with a great racket. STEPANIDA'S voice is heard. Where is the devil taking you?*)

Tatiana (without interrupting her playing). How long Nil stays. . .

Peter. Nobody seems to show up.

Tatiana. Are you waiting for Helena?

Peter. For nobody.

Teterev. Nobody will come to your house.

Tatiana. How gloomy you always are.

Teterev. Nobody will come to your house because there is nothing here to get.

Peter. So saith Terentey Bogoslovsky, the choir singer. . .

Teterev. (stubbornly). You see that even this old worn out soak of a bird dealer has spirit, a living soul, but you, both on the threshold of life, already half dead.

Peter. And you? What is your opinion of yourself?

Tatiana (rises from her chair). Oh stop! These are old stories. How often you have quarrelled through them.

Peter. I like your style, Terentey Chrisanfovich. . . And your role of judge is pleasing, though I should like to know why you play such a part. You always talk as though you would have us constantly singing acathistus hymns for the souls of the dead.

Teterev. No such hymns are sung. . .

Peter. No matter. You dislike us both. . .

Teterev. Very much.

Peter. We are obliged for your frankness.

(*POLJA enters.*)

*Translator's Note.—In Russia this is an invitation to drink, the sound being supposed to be an imitation of the gurgle of the throat.

Teterev. Don't mention it.

Polja. What are you treating them to?

Tatiana. Rudeness.

Teterev. Or much better, truth.

Polja. I want to go to the theatre. . . Will no one go with me?

Teterev. I. . .

Peter. What's on to-day?

Polja. *Our Second Youth.* Come with us Tatiana Wassilyevich.

Tatiana. No. . . I don't think I will go to the theatre this season. I am better off without it. Plays and plays with pistol shots, cries of distress, and sobbings only anger me. (*TETEREV strikes a single note on the piano and the deep melancholy tone fills the rooms.*) It is all so untrue. Life crushes us without noise, without screams . . or tears . . and nobody notices it.

Peter (gloomily). They only know the sorrows of love in their dreams. We never see the dramas of the luckless whose souls are torn between 'I would' and 'I must.'

Teterev (smilingly continues to drum on the bass note).

Polja (confused smiling). I like the theatre . . enormously. For instance, 'Don Caesar de Bazan, the Spanish nobleman.' How wonderfully beautiful, a real hero. . .

Teterev. Do I look like him?

Polja. What! Not a bit. . .

Teterev (smiling). No! . . I am sorry.

Tatiana. When I hear an actor on the stage making love, it makes me furious . . nothing like it ever happens in real life.

Polja. I am going. . . Terentey Chrisanfovich.

Teterev (stops drumming). No, I won't go with you when you see in me no resemblance to the Spanish nobleman. . . (*Exit POLJA laughing.*)

Peter (glances after her). What is this Spanish nobleman to her?

Teterev. He is a pithy, sound, healthy man.

Tatiana. Dresses well.

Teterev. And is a gay companion. Lively fellows always have good characters. Rascals are seldom gay.

Peter. Then you must be the greatest rascal in the world. . .

Teterev (sounds the soft, deep tone of the piano again). I am simply—a drunkard, nothing more. Do you know why there are so many drunkards in this country? Because it is comfortable to be a drunkard. In our dear Russia we love the drunks. Striving reformers are hated here but the brothers of the bottle are well beloved and because it is always easier to endure the small and weak than the great and good.

Peter (strides about the room). In our Russia . . in our Russia. . . How unnatural that sounds. Is Russia ours, mine, yours? Whose?

Whose are we?

Teterev (drums and sings). We are free birds.

Tatiana. Terentey Chrisanfovich, please stop your drumming. It is too funeral like.

Teterev (drums on). I am only accompanying my mood. (*Exit TATIANA angrily.*)

Peter (meditatively). No. . . You. . . But really, stop your drumming. It gets on one's nerves. . . I think that when a Frenchman or an Englishman says France or England: the word has a real meaning to him, sensible, secure. . something conceivable. . but when I say Russia, I feel that it is only a vain sound. I cannot put into the word any clear conception. (*Pause. TETEREV goes on drumming*). Many words we use with such general custom that we never think what meanings are hidden in them. . . Life. . my life. . for example, what do these two words contain? (*Strides silently back and forth. The melancholy note fills the room and TETEREV smilingly follows PETER with his eyes*). . The devil enticed me into those student disorders. I went to the university to study and I studied. Stop your eternal drumming. There was no regime which stood in the way of my studying Roman law. . none. On my honor. Only the spirit of college life betrayed my intentions. And two years are simply wiped out of my life. That is a violence done me. I thought to finish my studies, to become a jurist, to work. . to observe. . to live. . .

Teterev (prompting him ironically). To be the consolation of my parents and the uses of the church and state, in the role of an obedient servant of society.

Peter. Society? That is what I hate. Constantly increasing its demands upon the individual and constantly putting obstacles in the way of his development. 'First of all a man must be a citizen,' society told me in the persons of my friends. . and I was a citizen. . may the devil take them. . . I. . do not want. . . I am not obliged to comply with the demands of society. . . I am an individual and an individual is free. . stop that cursed cat-music, will you.

Teterev. I only accompany you. . citizen of half an hour. (*A noise is heard behind the hall door.*)

Peter (excited). Don't amuse yourself at my expense.

Teterev (looks at PETER provokingly and continues the drumming. NIL, HELEN, ZWETAHYEVA and SCHISHKIN enter, followed by TATIANA.)

Helena. What does this funeral knell mean? Hello, you frightful bugbear. Good evening almost Attorney General. What have you been up to?

Peter (surly.) Foolishness.

Teterev. I have been sounding the funeral service for a man gone prematurely blind.

Nil (To TETEREV). Listen,—I have a favor to ask. *Whispers in his ear and TETEREV nods).*

Zwetahyeva. Ah boys—it was interesting at the rehearsal.

Helena. Ah prosecuting attorney. . if you only knew how grimly Lieutenant Bykor was making love to me for the play.

Schishkin. A perfect calf, this Bykor. . .

Peter. What makes you suppose that I am interested in who makes love to you and how?

Helena. What a bad humor you are in.

Zwetahyeva. Peter Wassilyevich is always in a bad humor.

Schishkin. That is his customary state of mind.

Helena. Tanetshka! Still the same melancholy September night.

Tatiana. Yes, as usual.

Helena. And I am full of spirits. Tell me boys, how is it that I am always so enthusiastic.

Nil. I refuse to answer your question, for I always feel so myself.

Zwetahyeva. And so do it.

Schishkin. And I too.

Schishkin. I am not constantly so. . but

Tatiana. But constantly. .

Helena. Tanetshka! Are you joking? That's good! You bugbear—answer me, why do I feel so gay?

Teterév. Oh you, vanity personified.

Helena. What! Very well. I'll remind you of it when you make love again.

Nil. I wouldn't mind having a bite to eat. I have to go on watch.

Zwetahyeva. The whole night? Poor fellow!

Nil. For twenty-four hours. . . I had better go to the kitchen and pay Stepanida my respects.

Tatiana. I will tell her. . . *(Exit with NIL.)*

Teterév (to HELENA). Allow me to ask. . must I be in love with you?

Helena (advancing on him). Yes, you fresh rascal! you gloomy monster. Yes! yes!

Teterév (retreats). I obey. . it is not difficult. . . I was once in love with two girls and a married woman simultaneously.

Helena (continuing to advance). What of it?

Teterév. Nothing, no success.

Helena (half aloud glancing at PETER). What has happened between you? *(TETEREV laughs and they converse apart.)*

Schishkin (to PETER). Say, brother—can't you lend me a ruble? For two or three days my boots have been splitting.

Peter. There. . that makes seven altogether.

Schishkin. I see.

Zwetahyeva. Peter Wassilyevich, why don't you take part in our performances?

Peter. I can't act.

Schishkin. Do you think we can?

Zwetahyeva. Come to the rehearsal at least. These dear little soldiers are awfully interesting. One of them, named Schirkov, is a splendid youngster. So naive and droll and always smiles in such a jolly—bashful way. . . and doesn't understand anything at all.

Peter (at the side, watching HELENA). I cannot understand how people can be interesting who lack understanding.

Schishkin. There are lots of others besides Schirkov.

Peter. Whole companies. . .

Zwetahyeva. How can you talk so? I don't understand what you want. Such aristocratic sentiments.

Teterev (suddenly in a loud voice). I cannot pity. .

Helena. Pssh. . .

Peter. As you probably know, I am a burgess.

Schishkin. Still less intelligible then, your attitude towards the plain people.

Teterev. Nobody has ever had any pity for me.

Helena (half aloud). Do you not know that evil must always be repaid with goodness?

Teterev. I do not know anything about that sort of bookkeeping.

Helena. Then keep quiet.

Peter (listening to their conversation). And I do not understand why you deluge such people with your sympathy when in reality you have no feeling for them.

Zwetahyeva. We don't deluge them, we only share with them what we have.

Schishkin. Perhaps not even that. It is simply pleasant for us to be with them. They are so artless. One inhales among them something healthful as among the forest trees. We bookworms should get every breath of fresh air that we can. . .

Peter (stubbornly, with contained anger). You simply like to surround your life with illusions. And you approach these soldiers with concealed intentions. . . which to me—pardon me if I speak plainly—is highly ridiculous. To get fresh air among soldiers. . . that is, don't be offended. .

Zwetahyeva. Not for soldiers alone. You know that we shall have a performance too in the shops for the railroad men. . .

Peter. That does not alter the circumstances. I say that you make a mistake when you consider all this bustle a real occupation. You are convinced that you are developing the individual, but that is self-decep-

tion. Tomorrow your commissioned officer or foreman comes along and gives your individual a kick which knocks the whole thing out of his head. . . if you had after all managed to drive anything in.

Zwetahyeva. How spiteful such talk is. . .

Schishkin (gloomily). Yes. . . such talk is not agreeable. It is not the first time, and the more I hear of it the more I dislike it. Sometime soon, Peter, we shall have our final conversation.

Peter (coolly and lazily). I am not alarmed. But I am curious about this final moment.

Helena (to TETEREV, excitedly). Why do you give yourself a bad name? Boys, why does this fellow want to make everyone think him a monster?

Peter. To seem original, I imagine.

Zwetahyeva. Exactly! He wants to appear interesting. All men want to seem interesting in the presence of women. One plays the pessimist, another Mephistopheles, . . . only to be put down as a lot of lazy bones.

Teterev. Brief, clear. . . and serviceable!

Zwetahyeva. Shall I pay you compliments? I know what you are waiting for!

Teterev. Then you know more than I do. And you may know, too, whether we should repay evil with goodness. More simply expressed, you believe that goodness and evil are of equal value?

Zwetahyeva. Now his wheels begin to turn.

Schishkin. But don't interrupt him, it's interesting. I like to hear Teterev talk. Once in a while he drives a splinter into your head. As he often says, the thoughts which we commonly have are only old worn out pennies.

Peter. How generous of you to include all of us in your estimate of yourself.

Schishkin. The truth, friends, always the truth. In trivial matters, too, we must be sincere. I confess openly that I have never uttered a single original word, though I should have liked to, gentlemen.

Teterev. But at this moment you have done so.

Schishkim (quickly). That's a lie. What did I say?

Teterev. You have uttered it. Truly. What it was. . . guess!

Schishkin. It seems to have been wholly unpremeditated.

Teterev. There is no other way to be original. I've tried it.

Helena. Bugaboo! Why don't you tell us about goodness and evil?

Schishkin. Now his philosophical mill will begin to grind.

Teterev (assumes a posture). Most respected bipeds, when you say that evil must be repaid with goodness you are gone mad. Evil is born in you and has little value, but goodness you have invented for yourselves, and you have paid a terrible price for it; it is to you a prodigious rarity and

more beautiful than all else in this world. Hear the conclusion: To equalize goodness and evil is not profitable but quite futile. I advise you, repay goodness with goodness and never for more than you receive lest you encourage usury, for man is avaricious, and having once received more than he should receive, he will next demand still more. We pay less than is his due for having been once deceived, he will surely bear you ill will, call you bankrupt and cease to respect you; will not repay you with goodness but will throw you alms. Brethren, be firm and strictly just in recompensing the goodness which has been done you, for the world affords no sadder nor more disgusting figure than the man who gives alms to his neighbor. But evil, reward evil with evil a hundredfold, with free handed cruelty recompense the evil which your neighbor does you. If you ask him bread and he gives you a stone, then throw down a mountain on his head. (*TETEREV, beginning jocosely becomes gradually serious and ends his speech with conviction. As he finishes he goes to one side with heavy strides. For a moment silence, all struck by the sincerity and power of his speech.*)

Helena (softly). You must have suffered much. . .

Teterev (snarling). And the fact that I have suffered leads me to hope that at some time others will suffer too in return. . . At my hands. .

Nil (enters with a dish and loaf of bread in his hands.. As he speaks he takes care not to spill the contents of the dish. TATIANA follows him in). All that is philosophy. It is a bad habit of yours, Tatiana, to turn every incident into a philosophical problem right on the spot. "It is raining," philosophy, "your finger hurts you," more philosophy. "The stove smokes," again philosophy. When I hear so much philosophy made out of such trifles, I involuntarily think that education is not a blessing to everybody.

Tatiana. You are rude, Nil.

Nil (sits at the table and eats). What does rude mean?. . You are despondent. Employ yourself. A busy person is never despondent. You stay home too much—go to the country, live in a village, teach the country children . . or go to Moscow, and study what is to be studied. . .

Helena. That is good—and give him a scolding, too. (*Points to TETEREV.*)

Nil (glancing at him). A good retort. . . He poses as a profound Heraclitus.

Teterev. Call me a Swift, if you know who he was.

Nil. Too much honor.

Peter. Yes, altogether too much.

Teterev. But it would please me. . .

Zwetahyeva. What a gourmand you are!

Nil (looking into his dish). Don't be angry. . . Now what I wanted to say. . . Polja, but . . where did she go?

Tatiana. To the theatre; why?

Nil. Nothing. . . I only asked the question.

Tatiana. What do you want with her?

Nil. Nothing . . . that is, at the moment . . . but generally speaking, I want . . . the devil. . . what am I talking about? (*All except TATIANA smile.*)

Tatiana (insistently). What do you want with her?

Nil (eats without answering).

Helena (spiritedly to Tatiana). What did he scold you for?

Zwetahyeva. Yes that is interesting.

Schishkin. I like to see Nil lecture us.

Peter. And I like to see him eat.

Nil. Whatever I do, I easily do it well.

Helena. Tanjá tell us.

Tatiana. I have no desire to.

Zwetahyeva. You never have any desires.

Tatiana. How do you know? Perhaps I have a great desire—to die!

Zwetahyeva. Ugh. . . nonsense.

Helena. Brr! I don't like to talk of death.

Nil. What can you say about death until you are dead?

Teterev. Hear, a true philosopher.

Helena. Come with me, boys, it's about time, the samovar must have been ready for some time.

Schishkin. Oh yes. I could enjoy a glass of tea now, and a bite or two, if we may hope?

Helena. Certainly.

Schishkin (points to Nil). When I look at him I confess I envy him.

Nil. Don't. I have eaten everything. I will go with you. I have an hour left yet. . .

Tatiana. But you had better rest Nil, before you go on watch.

Nil. It is all the same.

Helena. Peter Wassilyevich, are you going?

Peter. If you will allow. . .

Helena. My generous permission—your arm. . .

Zwetahyeva. Take your partners, everybody, Nil Wassilyevich, you and I. . .

Schishkin (to TATIANA). Then you and I. . .

Teterev. They say that there are more women than men. Still, I used to live in cities. . . and there was never a woman left over for me.

Helena (goes to the door, laughing and singing). Allons enfants de la patri. . . i. . . i. . . e!

Schishkin (pushes PETER in the back). Step lively, son of our fatherland. (*Exit all noisily, with singing and laughing. The room re-*

mains empty for a moment, then the door to the old folks' room is opened, AKOOLINA IVANOVNA enters, yawns and blows out the lamps. The voice of BEZSEME NOV is heard from his room, monotonously reading the psalm. AKOOLINA IVANOVNA returning to her room in the darkness stumbles over a chair.) (The curtain falls.)

ACT II

The same room. Midday in autumn. BEZSEME NOV is at the table. TATIANA is silently pacing the room. PETER standing at the archway, looks out of the window.

Bezsemenov. I have been talking to you for a whole damned hour, my dear children . . . but it seems that I have not found the word that will touch your hearts. . . one listens with his back turned and the other stalks about like a crow on a fence.

Tatiana. I will sit down. *(She sits.)*

Peter (faces his father). Just come out and tell us exactly what you want.

Bezsemenov. I want to understand what sort of people you are—what sort of a man are you?

Peter. Wait, and you will understand. I will answer you, let me get through with my studies.

Bezsemenov. Yes. . . to be sure, study! But you do not study, you only make a fool of yourself. All you have learned is to despise humanity. you have acquired no standard of conduct. They suspended you from the university and you think they did you an injustice. . . you are mistaken. The business of a student is not to regulate the universe. If every twenty-year-old school boy should project a new order of life, everything would be overturned. There would be no place left in the whole world for a business man. First be a master of your own business and then do all the talking you will, but until then any listener to your discourse has the right to tell you to shut up. I am saying this to you not because I am angry, but out of the bottom of my heart; you are my son, my own flesh and blood. I have nothing to say to Nil, although I have had trouble enough with him and he is my adopted son. But he is not my own flesh and blood. And the older he gets the further apart we drift. Anybody can see that he will turn out a bum of some kind, maybe an actor. . . or a socialist. . . let him go his way.

Akoolina Ivanovna (putting her head through the door, her voice sorrowful and questioning). Father isn't it time for dinner?

Bezsemenov (harshly). Get out. Don't be coming in where you are not wanted. *(AKOOLINA IVANOVNA disappears. TATIANA looks at her father reproachfully, rises and paces the room again).* Do you see! Your

mother hardly knows a moment's peace in protecting you, so afraid I should insult you. But who would I willingly insult? I have myself suffered bitter insult from you. In my own house I must move about cautiously as though the floors were scattered with glass. My oldest friends have ceased to call—'your children are educated' they say, 'and we are only old fashioned people, they will laugh at us.' And you have laughed at them more than once, and I have blushed for you. All my friends have left me, as though educated children were a pest in the house. You have no consideration for your father, never a cordial word, never any confidences; treat him like a stranger. Yet I love you, yes, I love you. Do you understand what that means—love? You are suspended,—that hurts me. Tatiana is getting to be an old maid—and that hurts me too. It makes me ashamed of myself before everybody. In what way is Tatiana less worthy than many other girls who do marry . . . and I should like to see you a grown man, Peter, and not eternally a student. There is Philip Nasavov's son—graduated, married a girl with a good dowry, two thousand rubles a year . . . and will soon be an alderman. . .

Peter. Wait. . . I will marry, too.

Bezsemenov. Yes, I see. Tomorrow morning even. But who? A whirligig, with an empty head—and worse and more of it, a widow. Ah!

Peter (springing up). You have no right to call her that.

Bezsemenov. What!—widow or whirligig?

Tatiana. Papa. I beg of you . . . please stop. Petja, leave us. See, I am still . . . listen . . . I don't know what to think . . . father, when you talk so, I feel that you are right, yes, you are right, I know it, believe me I feel it. But your truth is strange to us, to me, to him . . . do you understand? We have our truth . . . do not be angry . . . wait . . . there are two truths, papa. . . :

Bezsemenov (jumping up). You are wrong. . . there is but one truth and that is mine. What is your truth? Where is it? Show it to me!

Peter. Don't be yelling, father. I also say yes. You are right, but your truth is too narrow for us. We have outgrown your truth as we have outgrown the dresses of our childhood. It is too close, it oppresses us. The elements of your life, your whole experience. . . is of no use to us. . .

Bezsemenov. Yes. . . you. . . you. . . naturally. . . you are educated people and I am a fool. But you. . .

Tatiana. It is not so, it is not so. . .

Bezsemenov. Yes it is so. You have visitors and noise the whole day long. . . And it is impossible to get any sleep at night . . . before my very eyes you are flirting with one of the servants. . . You (*to TATIANA*) are more and more scornful. . . and we, mother and I. . . must stand ourselves in the corner. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (enters hastily, in a beseeching tone). My dears,

but . . my dearest . . do I object? I am willing to stand in a corner or even in a pig pen, only stop quarrelling, my dears, stop gnawing each other.

Bezsemenov (*pulls AKOOLINA with one hand and pushes her with the other*). Stay out, old woman. They have no use for either of us. They are wise and you and I are strangers to them.

Tatiana (*groans*). What torture! What torture!

Peter (*pale and desperate*). But listen, father. . . It is folly! folly! So suddenly. .

Bezsemenov. Suddenly! You lie, it is not suddenly—year after year it has eaten at my heart. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Petja, stop! give in. . Tanja! have mercy on your father. . .

Bezsemenov. Folly! You are the fool. It is terrible but not folly. . Father and children have lived under one roof, and suddenly the children spring up with a discovery, that there are two truths. You are beasts.

Tatiana. Peter, go out. Father, be quiet, I beg of you.

Bezsemenov. You are pitiless. . you oppress us. . what are you so proud of? What have you accomplished? And we—we have lived! we have worked . . and built houses . . for you . . we have sinned, perhaps grievously . . for you!

Peter (*cries*). Did I ask you to do all this?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Peter for the sake of. .

Tatiana. Go away, . . I can't stand it, I shall soon leave. . . (*sinks exhausted into her chair*).

Bezsemenov. Aha! Now you are running from the truth like the devil from holy water. . Your conscience reproaches you. .

Nil (*throws the hall door open and remains at the threshold. He is just from work, his face and hands blackened with smoke and soot. He is wearing a short jacket shining with oil, a strap for a belt, and dirty top boots reaching to his knees. As he enters he extends his hand.*) Give me twenty kopecs quick, I must pay the cabman. (*His unexpected arrival and the sudden, quiet tone of his voice ends the noise in the room. For a moment all stare at him silently. He understands what has been going on and smiles sympathetically.*) So! Skirmishing again?

Bezsemenov (*yells at him*). You savage! Do you realize where you are?

Nil. Hm! Where am I?

Bezsemenov. With your cap on. Take it off. .

Akoolina Ivanovna. What do you mean? Coming into the parlor all dirty! Aren't you smart!

Nil. Just give me the twenty kopecs.

Peter (*gives him money and speaks to him in a low tone*). Come right back.

Nil (smiling). Do you need my help? All right. (*exit.*)

Bezsemenov. There he is! A brash fellow, has picked up something somewhere. . but hasn't the least respect for anything.

Akoolina Ivanovna (in a like tone of voice). That's so. A tramp! Tanja, go . . go to the kitchen . . tell Stepanida to serve dinner. (*TATIANA goes out.*)

Bezsemenov (smiling gloomily). Yes, and where will you send Peter to? Ah, you! foolish old woman. In reality, foolish. Understand me clearly, I am no wild beast. I yell at them only from the torture of my soul, not because I am angry with them. Why do you keep them out of my way?

Akoolina Ivanovna. I know, my dear, I know all that, but I am so sorry for them. We are both old people and very nearly worn out. What is there left for us to do? And they are only beginning their lives. They will meet with troubles enough from outsiders, the poor things. .

Peter. Father, you are getting excited—you imagine things. .

Bezsemenov. I am afraid. The times are troubled. Everything is cracking to pieces, life becomes feverish. . . I am full of anxiety for you. Suppose something happens to you, who will take care of us in our old age? You are our only support. There is Nil—I would not trust him around the corner, and then Teterev, sour old bird, avoid them, they do not like us, look out!

Peter. Nothing is going to happen to me. . . I will wait a little while. . then get permission to go back to the university. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Do it as soon as possible, Petja, assure your father.

Bezsemenov. I believe in you Peter, I begin to believe in you. . I have confidence that you will not live your life worse than I have. . . Still sometimes. .

Peter. Well then. let's drop the subject. . . Remember how often we have such scenes.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Ah my dear ones!

Bezsemenov. And here, Tatiana, too. . ah, she must give up school teaching. What does she get out of it, only trouble.

Peter. Yes, she needs a rest. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Yes, indeed.

Nil (enters in a blue blouse, but not yet washed). Are we going to have dinner soon? (*PETER at NIL's glance goes quickly into the hall.*)

Bezsemenov. You had better wash your mug first and then ask about dinner.

Nil. My mug is not large. Soon washed, but as for dinner, I am as hungry as a wolf. It was rainy, stormy, cold and a bum old locomotive. A night of that leaves you as tired as a dog. The general superintendent

must make one of these trips with me, . . in such weather and on one of those rattle-trap locomotives.

Bezsemenov. Stop it. . Speak with respect of your superiors. . . Take care that no trouble comes out of it. . .

Nil. For my superiors no trouble will come out of it. .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Father is not speaking of them but of you yourself.

Nil. Aha, of me. .

Bezsemenov. Yes, of you.

Nil. Aha!

Bezsemenov. Shut up! Listen!

Nil. I am listening.

Bezsemenov. You have become very fresh lately, all of a sudden.

Nil. Since when?

Bezsemenov. Hold your tongue!

Nil. Hold my tongue (*sticks his tongue out*). Can't talk to anybody when I hold my tongue.

Akoolina Ivanovna (*slaps her hands together*). Shameless scamp—Who are you sticking your tongue out at?

Bezsemenov. Wait mother, wait. .

Akoolina Ivanovna (*reproachfully shakes her head and walks away*).

Bezsemenov. Smart Alex. I want to have a talk with you.

Nil. After dinner.

Bezsemenov. Right away.

Nil. Better put it off until after dinner. I am hungry, tired, half frozen. Do me the favor to put it off . . besides what can you have to say? You will only insult me, better tell me straight out that you hate me, that you want me to go. . .

Bezsemenov. Go to the devil. (*He goes into his own room, closing the door firmly.*)

Nil (*growls*). Very well, better with him than with you. (*Walks about the room humming a melody.*)

Tatiana (*enters*).

Nil. Cats and dogs again, eh?

Tatiana. You get that impression?

Nil. Quite distinctly. You have been playing another scene out of the interminable comedy. 'You shove, I push.'

Tatiana. It is shameful to talk so . . you are able to keep away.

Nil. Yes, I can keep away from all this foolishness. And pretty soon I will be out of it forever. . . I shall be transferred . . depot superintendent. . . These tiresome all night runs on freight trains will be through with. If it were only a passenger or an express train for instance . . cutting through the air . . always a full head of steam, but these

freights . . hardly creeping, only the fireman near . . it is tiresome. . . I like to have lots of people about. . .

Tatiana. And still you are running away from us. . .

Nil. Yes . . pardon my frankness, the truth is I have to go. I am full of life, love noise, work, like simple, gay people. But you, do you imagine you live? No, you stalk around life with complaints, against whom? what? wherefore? why? Nobody knows.

Tatiana. Do you not know?

Nil. No. When a man is tired of lying on one side, he turns over on the other. When his life becomes intolerable, then he begins to move . . make a struggle . . turn over.

Tatiana. Don't you know there was a philosopher who said that life seems simple only to the stupid?

Nil. Then the philosophers must be experts in all kinds of stupidity. I don't take myself for a wise man, I simply find that it is unbearably tiresome to live here. I don't know why. I think it is because you are too fond of complaining. What is the use, who will help you—nobody will and nobody should.

Tatiana. How stale, Nil.

Nil. Is that staleness?

Tatiana. Yes, and cruelty. . . I think you have been infected with it by Teterev, who hates everybody,—I don't know why.

Nil. No not everybody. (*smiling.*) Don't you think Teterev resembles an axe?

Tatiana. What sort of an axe?

Nil. Oh! a common iron axe with a wooden haft.

Tatiana. No; stop joking. . . You know I like to talk to you so well. You are so refreshing.—Only you are so inattentive.

Nil. To what?

Tatiana. To people, to me.

Nil. But not towards everybody.

Tatiana. To me.

Nil. To you? Hm—yes. . . (*Both are silent. Nil glances at his boots. TATIANA looks at him in expectation.*) You see . . between you, that is to say, you. . . (*TATIANA makes a movement towards him which he does not notice.*) I esteem and love you but there is one thing I do not like . . why are you a teacher? You do not like it as an occupation, it only tires you, excites you. And there is great responsibility. Kids to-day are men to-morrow, they must be appreciated, loved. To succeed in any business you must love it. As you know I am very fond of forging iron. Before you lies a red, formless mass, wicked, scorching! To work it with a hammer is a tone delight. It spits at you with its hissing, fiery seething sparks, would burn your eyes out, blind you, would drive you

away. It is alive, elastic, and with vigorous blows from the shoulders you give it the shape you need.

Tatiana. One must be strong for that.

Nil. And skillful.

Tatiana. Listen Nil.— Do you never feel sorry?

Nil. For whom?

Helena (enters). Have you had your dinner? No? Come, please, to my room. What a pie I have baked! Where is the prosecuting attorney, wonderful boy!

Nil (going to HELENA). I am coming, to eat the beautiful pie up all by myself. Here they won't give me any food . . on purpose. They have it in for me here.

Helena. Your long tongue, no doubt . . Tanja.

Tatiana. I'll just ask mama. . . (*Exit.*)

Nil. How did you know that I stuck my tongue out at the old man?

Helena. Wh--at? I didn't know it, but what's the matter?

Nil. No, I won't discuss it. Tell me rather about your beautiful pie.

Helena. Oh, I'll find out. You know, I learned to bake pie from a convict who was in prison for murder. My husband allowed me to help in the kitchen, he was such a miserable skinny fellow. . .

Nil. Husband?

Helena. Dear sir, my husband was six feet, six.

Nil. As short as that?

Helena. Shut up. And such a moustache as he had. (*Makes a motion.*) Six inches.

Nil. I never heard before of a man's merits being measured by a foot rule.

Helena. Alas! He had no merits aside from his moustache.

Nil. Sad! But tell me rather about the pie.

Helena. My convict was a cook by trade. . . He had killed his wife . . but I took a liking to him. . . The murder . . it just happened.

Nil. I see, he only killed her between meals. . .

Helena. Get out! I won't talk with you. (*TATIANA appears in the door and looks at them. PETER looks at the other door.*)

Helena. Attorney general . . come to my apartment, I have a pie. . .

Peter. With pleasure.

Nil. His daddy scolded him to-day for his disrespectful behavior.

Peter. Stop, please.

Nil. I am surprised that he goes without getting permission.

Peter (looks anxiously towards his father's room). If we are going, let's go. . .

Tatiana. Go on, I'll be right there. . . (*NIL, PETER and HELENA go out. TATIANA goes towards her room.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna (calls from her room). Tanja!

Tatiana (stops short, shrugging her shoulders). What?

Akoolina Ivanovna (in the door). Come here. *(In a whisper.)*
Is Petruska going again? That?—

Tatiana. Yes . . so am I . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Oh, what a terrible misfortune. She will wrap Petja around her little finger . . I see it coming. If you would only speak to him. 'Stop brother,' please say. 'She is not a suitable match for you.' . . Tell him Tanja. She has only three thousand rubles and her father's pension. . . I know it. . .

Tatiana. Stop mama! Helena doesn't pay any attention to Peter.

Akoolina Ivanovna. On purpose! On purpose! She draws him on, the cunning thing, excites him. She makes believe. 'I am not interested in you' but she watches him like a cat.

Tatiana. Ah . . what do I care? Tell him yourself and leave me alone. . . I am so tired. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. You don't have to talk to him right away . . go . . lie down on your bed and take a rest.

Tatiana (almost crying). I have no place to rest. . . I am exhausted . . forever . . do you understand. . . I can rest no more in my whole life. . . You have worn me out. *(Runs out quickly into the entry.)*

Akoolina Ivanovna (makes a movement as if to bring TATIANA back, but remains on the spot with open mouth, speechless with astonishment, slapping her hands together).

Bezemenov (looks through the door). Skirmishing again.

Akoolina Ivanovna (with a gesture). No, it is nothing, nothing.

Bezemenov. Nothing! What is it? Was she impertinent again?

Akoolina Ivanovna. No! No! Not the least bit. What are you thinking about? I says to her, 'it is time to eat dinner,' and she says 'No.' Says I, 'why won't you?' And she says. . .

Bezemenov. You are fibbing, mother.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Honest.

Bezemenov. How often you have lied to me for their sakes. . . Look me in the eye . . you can't . . ah you. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (remains silent before her husband with hanging head. He, too, is silent, strokes his beard and heaves a sigh).

Bezemenov. No, what a pity that we have become separated from them . . through education.

Akoolina Ivanovna (softly). Ah well, father . . even the uneducated are no better.

Bezemenov. A man should never give his children more than he himself. But the thing that hurts me most is that they have no qualities . . no aspirations. Every man must have something

of his own, but they are like dough faces. There is Nil, for instance . . . he is fresh, a robber, but he has his own face, he is dangerous but you can understand him. Ah—ah! . . . When I was a youth I loved singing in the choir. . . I liked mushroom hunting . . . but what does Peter love?

Akoolina Ivanovna (with a sigh). He loves our tenant.

Bezsemenov. So—o! Just you wait . . . I will twist her neck.

Teterev (enters drowsily, more gloomy than ever, a whiskey flask and a wine glass in his hand).

Bezsemenov. Terentey Chrisanfovich, you have taken liberties with yourself again.

Teterev. Yesterday, after the evening mass. . .

Bezsemenov. Why?

Teterev. No reason. Shall we have dinner soon?

Akoolina Ivanovna. I'll set the table presently. (*Busies herself.*)

Bezsemenov. Ah, Terentey Chrisanfovich,—you are a smart man, but whiskey is the ruin of you.

Teterev. My respected burgess, you lie. Whiskey is not my ruin, but excess of power . . . in that lies my downfall.

Bezsemenov. Power can never be excessive, one can never have too much.

Teterev. Wrong again. To-day, power is useless. The necessary thing is skill, to-day one must have the flexibility of the serpent. (*Opens his fingers and shakes his fist.*) Look! I could smash this table to splinters with one blow. But what use are such hands in our day? I could chop wood with them, but to write is hard work, and makes me ridiculous. There is no outlet for my strength. A tent at a country fair would be the place for me, where I could crack chains and lift dumb bells. But I have studied, I have learned something and I was suspended from the university. I have learned not to display all I have, I do not care to have you come into my tent and enjoy my prowess, I would rather have you look at me with nervous apprehension.

Bezsemenov. You are a bad lot.

Teterev. Cattle of my magnitude are not usually bad fellows. You are familiar with zoology. They are by nature crafty, but if you add an evil disposition to their strength—save yourself.

Bezsemenov. Shall I run away? . . . I am in my own house.

Akoolina. Better keep still, father.

Teterev. That is good! You are in your house. A man's life is his house. That is why I have no place to live, my dear respected burgess

Bezsemenov. Your life is futile . . . without object, quite aimless. But if you would want. . .

Teterev. I don't want to want. It is disgusting. To me nobler to carouse around and go to perdition than to live an

you and your sort. Can you, burgess, imagine Teterév sober, respectably clad in livery and addressing you in servile tones? . . . No, you can't (POLJA *entering, is startled by TETEREV's look and shrinks back. Seeing her, he smiles goodnaturedly, nods his head and extends his hand.*)

Peterév. Good day. Don't be afraid. . . I wouldn't tell you anything more, even if I knew everything. . .

Polja (perplexed). . . What! . . . You can know nothing. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Ah, so you have come. Then go quick and tell Stepanida to bring in the cabbage soup.

Bezsemenov. It is time. . . (To *Teterév.*) I enjoy it when you display your opinions, especially when they are about yourself. You are almost terrible then. . . But when you begin to talk about your ideas, then we feel your weakness. (*Laughs with selfsatisfaction.*)

Teterév. And you please me too. You are just the right blend of prudence and cunning, just good enough and bad enough, sufficiently honest, sufficiently base, bold, cowardly. . . You are a typical example of the substantial citizen. In you is most completely embodied the quality of triteness, the force which exists and continues to exist and triumph, even over heroes. Let us have a drink before soup, respected mole.

Bezsemenov. When they bring the soup. But, why be swearing . . . never insult people without provocation. Keep your conversation reasonable, amiable and clear if you would be interesting and gladly listened to, but if you are nasty nobody wants to hear you, and nobody will, except a fool.

Nil (enters). Has Polja come?

Teterév (grinning). Yes.

Akoolina. What do you want with her?

Nil (To TETEREV, without answering). Been taking some little liberties again. . . Too often lately.

Teterév. It is better to drink whiskey than human blood . . . especially, since the blood of our contemporaries is so thin, tasteless, and nasty. There is very little healthy, tasty blood left now—it has all been sucked out. (POLJA and STEPANIDA *enter, the cook with a soup tureen and POLJA with a platter of meat.*)

Teterév. Good day. Don't be afraid. . . I wouldn't tell you any-
Polja (half-aloud). Not now . . . before everybody. . .

Nil. Why not? There is nothing to be afraid of.

Bezsemenov. Who?

Nil. I . . . and she. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. I don't understand.

Teterév (smiling). And I do. (*Pours whiskey and drinks.*)

semenov. What is it? What is the matter Pelajia?

(*confused, softly.*) Nothing. . .

Nil (sitting at the table). A secret . . . a mystery. . .

Bezsemenov. When people have secrets they talk of it privately, not before everybody. This mockery is enough to make a man leave his happy home, certain signs, certain hints, certain plots . . . sitting like a fool and drinking with your eyes. . . I ask you Nil, am I anything to you?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Sure enough, Nil . . . what is the matter with you?

Nil (quietly). You are my foster father, but it is not worth while to raise a row about it.—There is no reason to . . . nothing particular has happened. . .

Polja (rises, just after having seated herself). Nil . . . Wassilyevich has—told me last night—has asked me—

Bezsemenov. Has asked you what? . . .

Nil (quietly). Don't scare yourself. . . I just asked her whether or not she would marry me. (*BEZSEME NOV, stupefied with astonishment holds his spoon in the air. AKOOLINA IVANOVNA is stiff with fright. TETEREV blinks his wrist across his knee, trembling. POLJA stands with sunken head.*)

Nil (continuing). She told me that she would answer me to-day, that is all. . .

Teterev (his hands trembling). Very simple . . . if that is all. . .

Bezsemenov. Yes . . . really . . . very simple (*with great bitterness*) and quite after the fashion . . . quite up to date . . . what is the use of saying anything more. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (to NIL). You Anti-christ, you desperado. You ought to have spoken to us about it first.

Nil (spitefully). If I had kept my mouth shut. . .

Bezsemenov. Stop mother! It is none of our business! Eat and be still, and so will I.

Teterev (darkly). And I will speak . . . but later. . .

Bezsemenov. Yes—It is best for us all to be silent. . . You thank me too liberally for my hospitality. You leave secretly. . .

Nil. I have paid for your hospitality with hard work, and so I will continue, but I cannot submit to your dictation, I cannot marry that fool Syedor girl—and only because she can bring me a dowry of ten thousand rubles. What do I want with her when I like Polja? I have liked Polja for a long time and I have not hidden it from anybody. My life lies open and open it will remain. There is nothing to reproach me for, nothing to insult me about.

Bezsemenov (shaking his finger). Yes, very good . . . go ahead . . . marry! We won't stand in your way. But just tell me, where is your capital, if it is not a secret?

Nil. We will work. I shall soon be transferred to the depot. . .

She will find some employment of her own. You shall have your thirty rubles every month.

Bezsemenov. We shall see. . . It is easily promised.

Nil. I'll give you a note. . .

Teterev. Burgess! Burgess! Take the note, take it!

Bezsemenov. Mind your own business.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Do you think we will come to you for advice?

Teterev. No, truly, take it. If you don't take it now your conscience won't let you dare to accept the payments later on, but if you have the note, then you will collect it. Nil, give him the note, I promise to pay every month the sum . . .

Bezsemenov. I can take a note at any time. I would be justified in doing so. From his tenth year I have given him his food and drink, his clothing and shoes . . . up to twenty-seven . . . yes. . .

Nil. Don't you think it would be better to count it up some other time?

Bezsemenov. We can do so later on. (*Suddenly angry.*) Remember, from now on we are enemies. . . I cannot forgive this insult.

Nil. What insult? You did not expect me to marry you, did you?

Bezsemenov (yells without listening). Traitor! To abuse the man who has given you food and drink, brought you up—without consulting him . . . without asking . . . without getting . . . and you (*to POLJA*), mild one! Why do you hang your head? Hm? Why so silent? Do you know that I can . . .

Nil (rises). You can't do anything. Don't make trouble. I too, am a master in this house. I have worked for you for ten years, turned my wages over to you. To all this I have contributed (*Stamps his foot and throws his arms about, indicating the surrounding rooms*). The master is he who has created. (*As Nil speaks, POLJA rises and leaves the room, meeting PETER and TATIANA in the door. After a glance out of the window PETER steps back and TATIANA remains in the door, her hand on the jamb.*)

Bezsemenov (stares stupidly at NIL, with wide open eyes). What? You are boss here?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Come father, let's go . . . please come away (*Threatens NIL with her fist.*) Wait, Nilka. . . (*In tears.*) Wait, just wait!

Nil (convincingly). Yes, he is the master who maintains, remember that.

Akoolina Ivanovna (pulls her husband after her). Let's go, father . . . go. . . Don't say anything, nothing. Nobody would listen.

Bezsemenov (responding to the efforts of his wife). All right, stay here, you—boss—we will see who is boss here. (*Exit to his room.* NIL

walks about excitedly. On the street a hand organ.)

Nil. A beautiful kettle of fish! What the devil did I ask her for . . blockhead. . . I never can do anything right. . . It all blunders out whether I want it to or not.

Teterev. Oh, that's nothing. A very interesting scene. I took it all in, enjoyed it . . very good, very good. Don't excite yourself brother. . . You really have talent, you can play heroic roles. And believe me, we need heroes to-day. Men of our day must be divided into two classes, heroes, that is, fools, and villains, that is wise men.

Nil. To get Polja into such a painful situation! Did it frighten her . . no, she is not afraid. . . But she must feel hurt. . . ah! how disgusting.

Tatiana (still standing in the door). At the mention of POLJA's name she makes a movement. The hand organ stops.)

Teterev. It is exact, the division of human beings into fools and knaves, and there are shoals of knaves, beastly in spirit. They believe in nothing but force, but not the force that is contained in my breast, but the force of shrewdness, for shrewdness is the reason of the knave.

Nil (without listening to him). The wedding must be hurried up, if we are to have it . . though she has not answered me yet. . . But I know what she will say, my dear girl. . .How I hate these people . . this house . . this whole life . . putrefying . . all these deformities housed about us. . . They don't realize how they infect life, how they dissipate it in trivialities, what a dungeon they make of it, galley slaves, the unlucky! How have they accomplished it . . I cannot understand . . but I despise bunglers of life. . .

Tatiana (takes a step forward, stops, then goes noiselessly to the chest in the corner where she sits, stooped and listless. She seems very small and pitiful).

Teterev. But the blockheads serve as decorations of life. They are plentiful and always busily looking for something that not only they themselves but nobody else has any use for. They draw prospects of universal happiness and similar nonsense, they want to discover the beginning and end of everything . . and generally they create a lot of foolish clamor.

Nil (thoughtfully). Yes, nonsense . . that is in my line . . but she is saner than I and she loves to live with a quiet, attentive love . . and we are both resolute and when we want anything we will get it. She is as lusty as a new born babe . . we shall get along . . we shall live an excellent life.

Teterev. A fool may spend his entire life wondering why glass is transparent, but the knave goes to work and makes a bottle of it. (*The hand organ begins again, almost under the window.*)

Nil. Always bringing bottles in.

Teterev. Not all, all. The subject is fools. The fool asks: where is the fire before it is lit, and where does it go when it is put out, but the knave in the meantime sits down and gets warm.

Nil (meditatively). Yes . . . and gets warm.

Teterev. In reality—both are fools, one in an irresponsible heroic way, the other stupidly, beggar fashion, and though by different roads they both finally come to the same end, a grave, only a grave. (*Bursts out laughing.*)

Tatiana (nods her head gently).

Nil (to TETEREV). What's the matter with you?

Teterev. I am just laughing. . . The fool that is still alive looks at his dead brother and asks himself, where is he, but the knave inherits the property and has a hot old time. (*Laughs aloud.*)

Nil. You are drunk. Hadn't you better go to your room?

Teterev. Show me . . . where is it?

Nil. Stop your joking. Do you want me to show you?

Teterev. No, you won't show me. I am neither the plaintiff nor the defendant. I am by myself and in myself. I am the material proof exhibit A. of the sort of crime that life is. Life is spoiled, has badly sewed seams, is not cut in the fashion that decent people approve. Your burgesses have narrowed it, made it too short, too straight, and I am the tangible proof of the fact, of the fact that life has nothing to offer.

Nil. Now, Now!

Teterev. Let me alone. You think I might fall down! I am felled already, you queer customer, long since. I made a shift to get up but you came along and without noticing it, or perhaps wanting to, you have pushed me down again. But no matter, go your own way, you are healthy, you deserve to go where you want and how you want . . . but I have fallen to the bottom. . . I approve of . . . go!

Nil. What are you chattering about? It sounds interesting, but not quite intelligible.

Teterev. Is it necessary to be intelligible? Some things it is better not to understand because they are useless. Go your own way!

Nil. Very good. I'll go. (*Exit into entry without noticing TATIANA crouched into the corner.*)

Teterev (bowing after him). Luck to you—robber. Unnoticed. You have deprived me of my last hope. . . The devil take it. (*Goes to the table where he had left his bottle and notices the figure of Tatiana in the corner.*) By the way, who are you?

Tatiana (softly). It is I. (*The hand organ stops shortly.*)

Teterev. You? Hm—and I thought, it seemed to me. . .

Tatiana. No, it is I.

Teterev. I understand, but why are you here?

Tatiana (not loudly, but clearly and distinctly). Because life has nothing to offer.

Teterev (silently approaches her).

Tatiana. I do not know why I am so tired and depressed, so filled with anguish and terror. I am only twenty-eight . . . and I am ashamed, believe me, of my frailness and insignificance. My soul, my heart is empty, everything is void and desolate. It has come upon me unnoticed. I feel it, it hurts me, this vacancy which has grown up in my heart . . . and why am I telling you all this. . .

Teterev. I do not understand. . . I am too drunk. I don't understand the least thing.

Tatiana. No one will talk with me as I want . . . as I should like. . . I hoped that he would. . . I waited long . . . in silence . . . and this life, these endless quarrels, this triteness, this littleness . . . this narrow groove has crushed me softly, without my knowing it, crushed me imperceptibly, and I have no more strength to live . . . my desperation is powerless, I begin to be afraid . . . just now . . . suddenly I became afraid. . .

Teterev (shaking his head and with his tongue hanging out, he goes to the door, mumbling). Curses on this house . . . nothing else. (*TATIANA goes slowly to her room. For a short time the stage is vacant and still. Quickly and noiselessly POLJA enters, followed by NIL. They go to the window and sitting down, NIL seizes her hand and speaks, half aloud.*)

Nil. Pardon me, for what has happened. It was so foolish, nasty. But when I have anything to say, I can't keep still . . .

Polja (almost in a whisper). It doesn't matter, . . . it is all the same to me. They don't matter, it is all the same. . .

Nil. I know you love me, . . . I see it. . . I didn't ask you until I did . . . but you are funny! Yesterday you said, 'to-morrow I will answer you. I must think it over first.' Really you are joking, what was there to think over? You love me.

Polja. Oh yes, yes . . . for a long while. (*TATIANA steals out of the door of her room and stands behind the curtain, eavesdropping.*)

Nil. You shall see. Our life will be splendid. You are such a dear, affectionate chum. Want will not trouble us, nor misfortune.

Polja (simply). What shall I fear when I am with you? I am not timid, only a little bit meek.

Nil. But you are persevering, you are strong and plucky, you will not give in. I am so glad. . . I knew that everything would come out all right and so I am light hearted.

Polja. I knew too . . . that everything. . .

Nil. You knew! Really that's good. How splendid it is to love.

Polja. Wonderfully beautiful . . . friend of my heart, magnificent

boy. . .

Nil. How nice you say that . . how beautifully . .

Polja. No, don't praise me . . we must go . . or else perhaps some one will come.

Nil. Let them.

Polja. No, we have to . . Now . . one more kiss. (*Tears herself from NIL's arms and hurries past TATIANA without noticing her. NIL follows her smilingly, but sees TATIANA and stops indignant and astonished. She rises and looks him in the face with dull eyes and a lifeless smile.*)

Nil (*despisingly*). Eavesdropper. Ah . . You! (*Exit quickly. TATIANA stands motionless, as though stupefied. NIL leaves the door to the hall open. BEZSEMENOV's harsh voice is heard.*)

Bezsemenov. Stepanida! Who scattered the coal here? Haven't you seen it? Pick it up.

ACT III

The same room. Morning. STEPANIDA is dusting the furniture and AKOOLINA IVANOVNA is washing the tea things.

Akoolina Ivanovna. The meat is not very fat to-day, so you do this: there must have been left from yesterday's roast, some fat; put it in the soup so it will seem to be rich: you hear?

Stepanida. Yes ma'am.

Akoolina Ivanovna. And when you roast the calf . . don't put too much butter in the pan. . . I bought five pounds last Wednesday and when I looked at it yesterday there was hardly a pound left.

Stepanida. Well . . it was used up.

Akoolina Ivanovna. I can see that it was used up. Just look at your head, how much you have used up there, like a truckman greasing his wagon tongue.

Stepanida. Doesn't the smelling show you that I smear my hair with oil from the holy lamps?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Never mind! (*Pause.*) Where did Tatiana send you this morning?

Stepanida. To the drug store . . for salammoniac . . she says, go bring me twenty copecs worth of salammoniac.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Perhaps she has the headache . . (*sighs*). She is sick all the time.

Stepanida. You should marry her off . . then she would get healthy.

Akoolina Ivanovna. It is not too easy to marry off a girl these days. . . Still more, an educated one. . .

Stepanida. Give her a good dowry and maybe you can get even an educated one off. (*PETER peers out of his room and then disappears.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna. No, I shall never set eyes on that joy. . . Tanja does not want to marry.

Stepanida. What do you mean? Can't she marry, at her age?

Akoolina Ivanovna. What people were those in our boarder's room yesterday?

Stepanida. That teacher was there . . the red-headed one.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Is that the one whose wife eloped?

Stepanida. That was him. Then the excise officer, so yellow and thin in the face.

Akoolina Ivanovna. I know him. He married Merchant Pimenov's niece . . he is consumptive they say.

Stepanida. Is that so? You could see it easily.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Was our singer. . .

Stepanida. Yes, and Peter Wassilyevich, both, and the singer was bellowing clear up to two o'clock, like a bull.

Akoolina Ivanovna. And when did Petja get home?

Stepanida. It was beginning to be light when I opened the door.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Oh—oh!

Peter (enters). Stepanida, get through quicker, and go. . .

Stepanida. Sure, sure. I am only too glad to get through quick.

Peter. If you are so glad about it, work more and gossip less. (*Exit STEPANIDA, laughing.*)

Peter. Mama—I have begged you more than once to talk less with her . . can't you understand, conversation with a cook over personal matters . . pumping all the news out of her . . is not nice?

Akoolina Ivanovna (somewhat insulted). Do you want me to be always asking you who I can talk to? You don't grant me the honor of your conversations, so at least let me have a word with the cook.

Peter. Can't you understand she is not of your station? Common gossip is all you will get from her.

Akoolina Ivanovna. And what do I get from you? You have been in the house six months and you have never had half an hour to spare for your mother. And you have never told me anything about Moscow.

Peter. Listen, mama.

Akoolina Ivanovna. And when I begin to talk to you, I only get hurt. . . This is not right and the other is not right. You treat your own mother as though she was a little Sunday school girl, reproach her and make fun of her. (*With an angry gesture PETER goes out quickly into the hall.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna (calls after him). Just see how much I get from you. (*Wipes her eyes with her apron.*)

Pertshichin (enters, in a town jacket, into the holes of which are stuffed dirty bundles. He wears a fur cap, a rope belt, and rough slippers).

What are you kicking about? Has Petrucha hurt you? He flitted past me like a sand swallow, didn't even speak. . . Is Polja here?

Akoolina Ivanovna (*sighing*). In the kitchen, busy with the cabbage.

Pertshichin. Birds have a good custom. As soon as a little one is old enough it flies away as it pleases to the four winds, without any instructions from father or mother. . . Is there any tea left for me here?

Akoolina Ivanovna. It seems to me that you are always doing like the birds do.

Pertshichin. Quite right. Very good. . . I possess nothing . . . stand in nobody's way . . . as if I lived not on the earth but in the air.

Akoolina Ivanovna (*disdainfully*). That is why you are not respected. Here drink, only it is too cold, too thin.

Pertshichin (*holds the glass up to the light*). Yes, . . . not very strong . . . thanks though . . . better than if it was empty . . . and if it had been too thick I might have gotten stuck in it . . . and about respect . . . don't consult me, do as you please. . . I don't respect anybody either.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Who in the dickens wants your respect? Nobody.

Pertshichin. Good! I have marked that people who look to the earth for their bread are always trying to snatch it out of somebody else's mouth. I get my nourishment out of the air. I am fed by the birds of Heaven . . . my occupation is clean. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Yes . . . and when is the wedding to take place?

Pertshichin. Whose wedding? Mine! Ha! ha! The roguish cuckoo that would marry me is still in the forest . . . and at last she may come too late. . . I may be dead, unable to greet her.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Stop chattering such nonsense, and tell me straight out, when are you going to marry her off?

Pertshichin. Whom?

Akoolina Ivanovna. As if you don't know.

Pertshichin. My daughter? As soon as she wants to, I will marry her off . . . if there would only be somebody to marry her off to.

Akoolina Ivanovna. When did they begin it?

Pertshichin. What? Who?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Don't make a dunce of yourself. I hope she told you.

Pertshichin. About what?

Akoolina Ivanovna. The wedding.

Pertshichin. Whose wedding?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Pfuh! You are an old man and ought to be ashamed of such fooling.

Pertshichin. Don't get angry . . . tell me what's the matter.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Ah . . . I don't feel like talking to you at all.

Pertshichin. And still we have been talking for quite a spell . . without any sense. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (enviously and dryly). Then . . . when will you complete the arrangements for the wedding of Polja and Nil?

Pertshichin (springing up, in astonishment). What! with Nil. Oh come on!

Akoolina Ivanovna. No! Really, didn't she tell you anything about it, her own father?

Pertshichin. Come on! You are fooling. Nil! Now what do you think of that . . Is it so . . oh! devils! . . Polja! That would be a whole quadrille, not simply a polka . . and you are not bluffing. Must have been cleverly done . . and I always thought that Nil would marry your Tatiana, really I did. It looked obvious.

Akoolina Ivanovna (hurt). The question is, whether we would have married Tatiana to him. Do you think we want him so badly?

Pertshichin. Want him so badly? If I had ten daughters, I would give him the whole bunch with my eyes shut. Nil! Why he could support a hundred people by himself, that is what Nil is! Ha! ha!

Akoolina Ivanovna (spitefully). I see that he will have a very pleasant father-in-law.

Pertshichin. Father-in-law! No, I shall never be an old man of the mountain on their necks. . . I feel like dancing for joy. . . Now I am a free boy. . . Now I shall begin to live. Nobody to look after now. . . To the back woods for mine, disappearance, oh, ha! Polja! I thought so often: how is the poor girl going to live . . and I was ashamed, I brought the poor thing into existence and could do so little for her . . and now! now, I can go where I please, hunt rainbows . . explore distant nooks and corners. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Where do you want to go to? Nobody runs away from happiness.

Pertshichin. My happiness lies in the fact that I can run away . . and Polja . . she is certainly happy . . with Nil . . with a healthy, gay boy . . my brain dances in my head and larks sing in my breast. . . Certainly I am the fool for luck. (*Stamps and sings.*) My Polja has her glorious Nil secured, her happiness can scarcely be endured.

Bezsemenov (enters, his coat on, and his cap in his hand). Drunk again!

Pertshichin. From joy . . did you hear? Pelagia . . (*Laughs.*) She is going to marry Nil. Eh, what do you think of that?

Bezsemenov (coolly and dryly). It is none of my business, but we will get what is due us from Nil.

Pertshichin. And I always thought Nil was going to marry Tatiana.

Bezsemenov. What!

Pertshichin. Honest, because it was always plain that Tatiana had nothing against him, but seemed to fancy him, always looked at him, just as one does look, you know, and here suddenly . .

Bezsemenov (malignantly). I want to say several things to you, my friend: you are a besotted fool. It is not allowable to utter such vileness about a decent girl. That is number one. (*With greater force.*) Now, at whom and how your daughter was looking, and who and what she was liking and what kind of a girl she is, I am not going to discuss, but I will tell you one thing, if she is going to marry Nil, let her, for neither of them are worth a farthing. They are both heavily indebted to me and from now on I know what they are. That is number two. You and I are distinctly related, but consider yourself what you are, a bum, a regular bum. Tell me, who permitted you to come into this clean parlor in such an outfit, such slippers, such a jacket?

Pertshichin. What? Wassili Wassilyevich, what are you talking about? This is not the first time I have showed up like this.

Bezsemenov. I have not counted how many times, but I see one thing, that when you allow yourself to come so, it is plain that you have no respect for the master of the house. And I will tell you again, that you are a beggar, a bum, a loafer; do you hear? That is number three, and now get yourself out, skidoo!

Pertshichin (stupidly). Wassili Wassilevich, what for? What have . .

Bezsemenov. Out!

Pertshichin. Come to your senses! I have done nothing wrong.

Bezsemenov. Chase yourself.

Pertshichin (reproachfully and sympathetically). Ah . . you! Old man I am sorry for you. Good bye! (*Exit. BEZSEME NOV silently rises and with heavy elastic strides goes about the room black-browed. AKOOLINA IVANOVNA washing the dishes, timidly glances at her husband, her lips moving.*)

Bezsemenov. What are you hissing . . there what incantations are you muttering?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Praying father, praying.

Bezsemenov. Do you know I shall not be elected mayor . . I see I shall not . . the rascals!

Akoolina Ivanovna. Is that so? But is it possible? Perhaps you will, perhaps you will. . .

Bezsemenov. Perhaps I will not. Fedka Dosekin, the chairman of the locksmith's union, is going to be the candidate . . a kid, a pup.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Now don't get to worrying . . perhaps they will not elect him.

Bezsemenov. Oh yes they will, it is all fixed up. When I got to the

city hall, he was there as big as life, spouting away. 'Times,' says he, 'are hard, the people must stand together, workmen must combine. Everything belongs to the factories now, artisans can do nothing, each by himself.' Then I gets up and I says, 'the Sheenies is the trouble—and must be put a stop to.' I says, 'we must get up a complaint, and send it to the governor showing how the christians are done out of their rights and the Sheenies must all be driven out of here.'

Tatiana (opens the entry door noiselessly and goes to her room, trembling).

Bezsemenov. Then he says with a soft smile: 'where shall we put the christians who are still worse than sheenies,' and then he hinted and worked off some careful words . . I pretended I did not understand it, but I felt that he was driving at me, the scoundrel! I listened for awhile and then walked away . . wait, I think to myself, I will pay you all back . . and then Michael Krukov, the mantel setter comes by me. 'Looks like Dosekin will be mayor,' says he and then glanced on one side ashamed of himself. . . I wanted to say to him, 'you squint-eyed Judas!'

Helena (enters). Good day, Wassili Wassilyevich. Good day Akoolina Ivanovna.

Bezsemenov (dryly). Is it you? . . Welcome! . . What have you to say?

Helena. I have brought the rent.

Bezsemenov (more amiably). Yes, well . . how much is it? Twenty five rubles. But I am still to get forty copecs for two broken panes of glass in the corridor window, and then too, you owe me for hinges on the wood shed door which your cook broke off . . say twenty copecs.

Helena (smilingly). How precise you are. I have no small change, please, a three ruble piece.

Akoolina Ivanovna. And a bag of coal . . your cash another time.

Bezsemenov. How much for the coal?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Thirty five copecs.

Bezsemenov. Altogether, ninety five . . two rubles and five copecs change, thanks . . and as to my being precise, it is the truth, the whole world is held together by preciseness, even the sun goes up and down precisely . . its destiny has been so fixed. And when precision rules the heavens, how much more then, should it possess the earth. Even you yourself, madam, come with the rent before the term is well expired.

Helena. But I don't like to be in debt.

Bezsemenov. Excellent! And for that reason, everybody will trust you.

Helena. Good bye, I have to go.

Bezsemenov. Good day. (*Gazes after her.*) Nice looking, the rogue.

But still it would be a great pleasure to kick her out.

Akoolina Ivanova. It would be right, father.

Bezsemenov. Well, while she is here we can watch her, but if she was somewhere else, Petrushka would be bumming around her house, and then we must take into consideration the fact that she pays her rent promptly without any objections when we charge for things she breaks up. Him—yes, for Peter, it is dangerous . . . very dangerous, I should say.

Akoolina Ivanovna. But he does not mean to marry her . . . it's all just in fun.

Bezsemenov. If we could be sure that it was in fun, there would be nothing to be alarmed about. It would be the same as running a joint, even better. (*From TATIANA'S room a hoarse moan is heard.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna (softly). Ah!

Bezsemenov. What is that?

Akoolina Ivanovna (softly, listening). It seems to come from the hall.

Bezsemenov (aloud). Perhaps a cat.

Akoolina Ivanovna (indecisively). You know, father, what I want to tell you. . .

Bezsemenov. What is it? . . . Go on. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Don't you think you were too strict with Pertshichin? He is a harmless fellow.

Bezsemenov. If he is harmless, then he won't feel insulted . . . and if he does feel insulted then we won't lose much, for his acquaintance is no great honor. (*The groaning is heard again, louder than before.*) Where is that? Mother. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna (terrified, running about the room). I don't know what it is.

Bezsemenov (crosses quickly to PETER'S room). Is it here? Peter!

Akoolina Ivanovna (follows him frightened). Petja . . . Petja . . . Petja!

Tatiana (cries, from her room, chokingly). Help! . . . mama . . . save me . . . help! (*BEZSEME NOV and AKOOLINA Ivanovna, at the cry run hurriedly from PETER'S room to TATIANA'S door, where they remain a moment in hesitation, then rushing in together.*)

Tatiana. It is burning—o—o! It hurts! . . . a drink, give me a drink, save me!

Akoolina Ivanovna (runs out of TATIANA'S room into the hall). Have mercy! Help! Help! Petja!

Bezsemenov (without, in hollow tones). What is the matter, my daughter . . . what is the matter, my daughter?

Tatiana (without). Water. . . I am dying. . . everything is burning

up. . oh! God!

Akoolina Ivanovna. Come here, come here, somebody!

Bezsemenov (from TATIANA's room). Run get the doctor.

Peter (rushes in from the hall). What is the matter. . what is it? .

Akoolina Ivanovna (seizes his hand, out of breath). Tanja . . is dying. . .

Peter (tears himself away). Oh! let me go! . . (*Hurries into TATIANA's room.*)

Teterev (enters, pulling his jacket on). Fire, is it?

Bezsemenov (without). The doctor! Call the doctor, Petja. . . give him twenty-five rubles!

Peter (runs in from TATIANA's room, to TETEREV). Run for a physician. . tell him a woman. . a girl. . a case of poisoning. . has taken sal ammoniac. . faster. (*Exit TETEREV to the entry hastily.*)

Stephanida (bursts in). Oh heavenly fathers, heavenly fathers!

Tatiana (without). Petja. . I am burning up. . I am dying. . I want to live. . give me a drink!

Peter. How much! When did you take it? Tell me!

Bezsemenov. Oh Tatiana, my dear little daughter. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. You have destroyed yourself. . my little love.

Peter. Mama, go away. . *Stepanida*, take her. . I tell you, take her. . mama! (*HELENA enters and passes into TATIANA's room.*)

Peter (to HELENA). Take mama away. (*A strange woman comes in from the street, and stands at the door looking around and whispering.*)

Helena (leads AKOOLINA IVANOVNA out of TATIANA's room, whispering). It is nothing. . it is not dangerous.

Akoolina Ivanovna. My dear daughter. . my angel. . did I hurt you. . did I grieve you?

Helena. It will be all right. . the doctor will be here. . how distressing. . .

The Strange Woman (taking AKOOLINA IVANOVNA by the other arm). Don't grieve, mother! It might be worse. Lately, for instance, at merchant Sitanov's, a horse kicked the coachman in the side with his hind hoofs.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Oh my dear. . what shall I do? . . my only daughter. (*They lead her to her room. From TATIANA's room are heard her cries, the hollow voice of her father and PETER's nervous tones. Dishes clink, a chair is overturned, the iron bed creaks and a cushion falls softly to the floor. STEPANIDA runs in from TATIANA's room, her eyes popping out, mouth open and hair down. She snatches a plate from the sideboard, breaking something, and disappears again. Several visages appear at the hall door, but no one has the nerve to enter. Finally a small boy, a painter's apprentice risks it, looks hurriedly into TATIANA's room, and runs back with the information.*)

The Painter's Apprentice. She is dying. (*In the street a hand organ is heard, but it is quickly silenced. Among the curious in the entry voices are heard.*) 'Murdered.' 'Father.' 'He says to her, you better look out now.' 'On the head.' 'With what?' 'Don't you know?' 'What a bluff!' 'She cut herself.'

A woman's Voice. Was she married?

The Strange Woman (*enters from the old folks room, takes a lump of hard bread from the table, conceals it in her apron and goes to the door*). Softly. . she is dying!

A Man's Voice. What is her name?

The Strange Woman. Lisabetha. . .

A Woman's Voice. How was it?

The Strange Woman. It was this way. On Assumption Day her father told her, Lisabetha. . (*A movement in the crowd. TETEREV and a physician enter, the latter going in hat and coat directly to TATIANA's room. TETEREV takes only a glance into the room and turns gloomily away. Sounds of voices and groaning are heard and AKOOLINA IVANOVNA's howlings and lamentations are heard from the other side.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna (*without*). Let me go to her! (*In the hall a hollow sound of voices, from which comes a single cry.*) 'A serious man. . that choir singer . . is that him . . sure . . at John the Baptist's church.'

Teterev (*goes to the door*). What do you want here? Get out! well!

The Strange Woman (*approaches the door*). Yes, yes, good people. . This is none of your business.

Teterev. And who are you? What do you want here?

The Strange Woman. Father! I have vegetables, cucumbers, garlic.

Teterev. What do you want here?

The Strange Woman. I was going to Semyajuina's. . She is my god mother.

Teterev. Well, tell us what you want here.

The Strange Woman. When I was passing. . I heard a noise suddenly. . I thought there was a fire.

Teterev. Well.

The Strange Woman. Well! So I just came in to see what the trouble all was!

Teterev. You can go! All of you! Get out of the hall.

Stepanida (*to TETEREV, bursting out of TATIANA's room*). Quick, bring a bucket of water—quick, quick! (*Goes back into TATIANA's room.*)

An Old Man (*sticks his head in, his cheeks bound up*). She, sir (*Glances at THE STRANGE WOMAN*). She stole a piece of bread from the table. . (*TETEREV drives them out, and the room is filled with noise of stamping feet. A street urchin cries 'ah au!' and some aggrieved person cries! 'Will you please be quiet?'*)

Teterev (in the entry). To hell with you, get out!

Peter (enters from TATIANA'S room and glances into the entry). Be still! (*Calls into TATIANA'S room.*) Come father! to mama! Quick! (*Cries into the entry.*) Don't let anybody in. (*Returns to TATIANA'S room.*)

Bezsemenov (enters unsteadily, sits at the table and stares dully before himself, then rises and goes to his own room, from which comes AKOOLINA IVANOVNA'S lamentations).

Akoolina Ivanovna (without). Didn't I love her. . Didn't I care for her?

Helena (without). Be quiet dear, be quiet!

Akoolina Ivanovna (without). Father! My love! My dear! BEZSEME NOV closes the door and the speech is cut off. For a moment the stage remains vacant. From each side voices, BEZSEME NOV'S heavy tones and TATIANA'S soft moans confused with unseen movements. TETEREV brings in a pail of water, puts it down by the door, and taps softly. STEPANIDA appears, takes the pail and presently reappears, wiping the perspiration from her brow.)

Teterev. What is it?

Stepanida. Nothing.

Teterev. Is that what the doctor says?

Stepanida. Yes. . (*With a gesture.*) But what does a doctor know. . when both father and mother are not allowed in.

Teterev. Does she feel better?

Stepanida. Nobody can tell. She does not groan so much. . But she is as green as grass. . her eyes are so big. . She lies motionless. (*Whispers.*) How often have I told them 'why don't you marry her off? Marry her,' I says, but they would not listen to me and now they have it. It is not healthy for a girl to be without a husband. But on the other hand she did not believe in God either. Never said any prayers, never crossed herself. . well now here it all is. . .

Teterev. Shut up . . you crow.

Helena (enters). How is she?

Teterev. I don't know. . they say the doctor don't think it is dangerous. . .

Helena. The old folks are half dead. (*TETEREV silently shrugs his shoulders.*)

Stepanida (goes to the entry door). And I have forgotten all about the kitchen. (*Exit.*)

Helena. How was it? What has happened? Poor Tanja, she must be suffering tortures. (*wrinkles her forehead and trembles.*) It must be painful. . very. . terrible!

Teterev. I don't know. I have never drunk sal ammoniac.

Helena. How can you joke?

Teterev. I am not joking.

Helena (*approaches the door to PETER'S room and glances in*). And Petja. . . Peter Wassilyevich is still with her?

Teterev. Evidently. . . he has not come out yet.

Helena (*Thoughtfully*). I can imagine how he has been affected. (*Pause.*) When I happen to see anything of this kind I entertain a terrible hatred of misfortune.

Teterev (*laughing*). Very praiseworthy of you.

Helena. Do you understand. I could take hold of such a misfortune, trample it under my feet, and finish it for good.

Teterev. The misfortune?

Helena. Yes! I am not afraid of it. No, I just hate it! I like to live gaily, not monotonously, like to see lots of people around me. . . And I have the faculty of making life enjoyable both for myself and those around me.

Teterev. Very good.

Helena. And—do you know? I confess it. . . I am shamefully unfeeling. . . And harsh. . . I do not feel any sympathy for unfortunate people. You know there are people who are eternally unlucky, do with them what you will. Even put a cap of happiness on such a man's head and he will complain: 'ah I am so unlucky: I am so lonely. Nobody considers me. . . Life is so dark and wearisome, ah! oh! oh! alone!' When I run across such a customer I always feel a malicious desire to make him still unhappier!

Teterev. My dear lady. . . I will confess to you, too! I cannot endure it when women philosophize, but when you do so, I could kiss your hand.

Helena (*capriciously*). Is that all . . . and only when I philosophize? (*Recalling the circumstances.*) Now, what am I doing? Joking and chattering while another lies there in agony.

Teterev (*points to the old folks' door*). There, too, are suffering people . . . and wherever you may point your finger, suffering humanity . . . that is the habit of humanity. . .

Helena. But it all hurts.

Teterev. Of course. . .

Helena. And we must have pity on them.

Teterev. Not always. . . I hardly think sympathy is the thing. . . it is better to help them.

Helena. But you can't help everybody. . . and without sympathy nobody can be helped.

Teterev. My dear lady, I philosophize thus: Suffering springs mostly from desire. Now people have certain desires which deserve respect, and other desires which do not deserve respect. Assist them in the realization

of those desires which make men noble, which tend to place them above the beasts.

Helena (without listening). Perhaps it is so. . But what (*nods towards TATIANA'S room.*) can be happening there? Perhaps she has fallen asleep. . it is so quiet. . somebody is whispering. . and the old folks are in their corner. . It all seems so strange. . Suddenly groans, noise, cries, commotion. . and now again everything is quiet. . motionless. .

Teterev. Such is life itself. . first we hear people shouting and crying. . then they become tired and still. . when they have gotten rested they break out again. . And in this house everything subsides with astonishing suddenness, both cries of pain and the laughter of joy. Every sort of commotion in this house reminds one of the flogging of a mud puddle. . and the last echoes are triteness, triviality—the household gods of this establishment, whether in triumph or maddened by defeat and pain, always the last words.

Helena (pensively). When I lived at the prison things were interesting. . my husband was a gambler. . drank a lot and went hunting. It was in a provincial town where there were a lot of common people, and I was free, went nowhere, saw nobody and lived with the convicts. . they really loved me, I think. Queer folk when you look at them closely, but nice, unaffected people, I assure you. To see them it seemed impossible to realize that this one was a murderer, that one a burglar and another the perpetrator of some terrible crime. Once I asked of one of them: 'Did you commit murder,' and he answered, 'I did, Helena Nikolahyevna, but how could I help it.' Yet I had the impression that he had been shouldered with somebody else's crime, as though the stone in his hand had been thrown by another's strength. . Yes, I took them all kinds of books, got them cards and checkers for each cell, tobacco, wine, just a little. . During their exercise they played ball or skittles—just like so many children. I give you my word. And sometimes I would read funny books to them and they would laugh like children again. I bought birds and bird cages for every cell and they loved the little bird singers as well as they did me. And they enjoyed it when I would put on something bright, a red or yellow waist, for they were fond of gay colors so I always wore the gayest things I could find. (*Sighs.*) Ah, those were good times. Three years flew by. . and when my husband was killed by a horse, I cried I think, not so much over him, as on account of the prison, . . I was sorry to have to leave it. . And the convicts—they were sad too. (*Looks about the room.*) Here in this town I live less pleasantly . . there is something evil in this house . . not that the people are bad. . it is something else. . still you know I am melancholy, heavy hearted. . We sit here and talk. . and a human being is dying perhaps, in there. . .

Teterev (quietly). And we do not sympathize with her.

Helena (quickly). You do not sympathize with her.

Teterev. Nor you either.

Helena (softly). Yes, you are right. It is not pleasant, I know, but I am not moved. Often we realize that a thing is pitiful without feeling pity. Peter Wassilyevich gives me much more concern than I feel for her. I sympathize with him too . . . his life is not pleasant.

Teterev. It is not pleasant for anybody here.

Polja (enters). Good morni . . .

Helena (jumps up and hurries to her). Pssh, softly! You know Tatiana has poisoned herself.

Polja. Wh—at!

Helena. Yes, the doctor is here . . . and her brother. . .

Polja. Is she dying? Is she dead?

Helena. Nobody knows. . .

Polja. Why? Did she say?

Helena. I don't know. I don't think she did.

Peter (puts his dishevelled head in the room). Helena Nikolah-yevna . . . just for a moment. (*Exit HELENA quickly into TATIANA'S room.*)

Polja (to TETEREV). What are you looking at me that way for?

Teterev. You have often asked me that.

Polja. And you have often stared at me so. Why do you have such a peculiar look for me . . . why do you do it? (*Severely, advancing on him.*) Do you mean to say that I am responsible?

Teterev (smiling). Do you feel—guilty?

Polja. I only feel that I am under no obligations to you. Tell me, rather, how it all happened.

Teterev. Somebody, yesterday, gave her a light blow, and to-day, being a delicate thing, she has fallen down. That is all.

Polja. It is not true!

Teterev. What is not true?

Polja. I know what you are driving at. . . It is not true—Nil—

Teterev. What—Nil? Where does Nil come in?

Polja. Neither he nor I—neither of us are in the least responsible—though I know you blame us—I love him—and he loves me—long ago we began. . .

Teterev (earnestly). I do not blame you in the least. But you hear the voice of self-accusation and want to clear yourself before the first man you come across. Why? I—respect you highly—have I not insisted time after time, that you should go away . . . leave this place as soon as you can, and don't come back, for things are unwholesome here and your heart will be crushed. . . That is what I have told you. . .

Polja. Yes—and what more?

Teterev. Nothing. I simply say that if you had not come, you would not have experienced that which you are now going through with. That's all.

Polja. But how is she? Is it dangerous? What with?

Teterev. I don't know. (*Enter PETER and the doctor from TATIANA'S room.*)

Peter. Polja—please help Helena Nikolahyevna.

Teterev. (to PETER). Well, how is it?

The Doctor. A trifling matter. The patient is nervous, but otherwise in good shape. She only drank a little. . . She burned her esophagus and some of the fluid reached her stomach but only a small quantity . . even that we pumped out. . .

Peter. You are tired doctor . . take a chair please.

The Doctor. Thanks . . she will be sick about a week. . . I had an interesting case recently . . a drunken painter swallowed a glass of varnish . . took it for beer. (*BEZSEME NOV enters from his room, stands gloomily at the door and looks questioningly at the doctor.*)

Peter. Compose yourself father—it is not dangerous.

The Doctor. Don't be worried. She will be up in a couple of days.

Bezsemenov. Is that true?

The Doctor. I assure you.

Bezsemenov. Well . . thank you! If it is true . . when danger is over, my thanks. Peter, come here. (*Exeunt PETER and BEZSEME NOV into the old folks' room; whispers and the counting of money are heard.*)

Teterev (to the doctor). And what happened to the painter?

The Doctor. What did you say?

Teterev. What became of the painter?

The Doctor. Ah, the painter, nothing more. He got well. . . Hm. . . I think I have met you somewhere. . .

Teterev. Possibly.

The Doctor. Were you in the typhoid barracks?

Teterev. I was.

The Doctor (gladly). Aha! Yes, yes, so it is! Your face is familiar. . . Allow me . . it was in the spring, was it not? I think I remember your name.

Teterev. And I remember you, too. . .

The Doctor. Yes.

Teterev. I do. During my convalescence I asked you to have my allowance increased, but you cut me off with a nasty glance: 'Be satisfied with what is given to you. There are too many bums and tramps anyway.'

The Doctor (confused). I beg your pardon—you see—this is—excuse me, but your name; I am Nikolas Troerookov. . .

Teterev (advancing). And I am Terentey Bogoslovski, called

Teterev, hereditary sir drunkard and knight of the order of the green snakes. (*The doctor retreats.*) Don't be alarmed doctor, I won't touch you. (*Exit, passing the doctor who looks after him in annoyance, twirling his hat.* PETER enters.)

The Doctor (still looking towards the entry door). Goodbye. They are waiting for me. In case she complains of pain, give her some more of those drops but she should not feel much discomfort . . . goodbye. . . Oh yes . . . please tell me . . . there was an original fellow here just now . . . is he related to you?

Peter. No, only a boarder.

The Doctor. Ah . . . very entertaining . . . a very original fellow . . . thank you. (*Exit PETER accompanying him to the entry door.* BEZSEME NOV and AKOOLINA IVANOVNA enter from their room and cross on tip toe to TATIANA'S door.)

Bezsemenov. Wait a minute, don't go in (*listens*). Can't hear anything . . . maybe she is asleep. . . Take care, we must not wake her up. (*Leads his wife to the trunk in the corner where they sit.*) Hm—yes, mother, this is what we have lived for. It will be the gossip of the town—and no end to it.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Father, what do you mean? Let them say what they please if she only don't die. They may shout it from the house tops.

Bezsemenov. Yes. . . I know that . . . only. . . But you don't understand . . . what a disgrace it is to us. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. No! No! Why is it a disgrace?

Bezsemenov. Realize, our daughter tried to poison herself. . . Did we persecute her or cause her to suffer? Have we been like wild beasts to her? . . . People will be saying everything. I would have endured anything for the sake of my children . . . why . . . what for . . . at least we should know the reason . . . a father with children who does not understand the wants of their souls, their desires. Why do you close your ears to their hopes . . . that will be damaging!

Akoolina Ivanovna. I understand. It will be bad for me too. I am her mother. We work and work from morning to night for them and nobody says thank you. . . I understand. . . If they were only healthy . . . and had some spirit . . . but. . .

Polja (entering from TATIANA'S room). She is falling asleep . . . keep quiet.

Bezsemenov (rises). How is she . . . can we look at her?

Akoolina Ivanovna. Just as easy as we can?

Polja. The doctor said that nobody was to be let in.

Bezsemenov (mistrustfully). How do you know? You were not there while the doctor was here.

Polja. Helena Nikolahyevna told me.

Bezsemenov. Is she there? So, a stranger may be with her but not the parents—curious?

Akoolina Ivanovna. We must eat dinner in the kitchen to-day, so as not to make any noise . . . my dear child. . . I can't even see her. (*With a gesture of despair, exit to entry.* *POLJA standing erect at the sideboard glances at TATIANA'S door, her forehead wrinkled and her lips compressed.* *BEZSEME NOV sits at the table as if in anticipation of something.*)

Polja (softly). Was my father here?

Bezsemenov. Your father? Are you asking about him? What is your father to you? But I know who you want to know about. (*POLJA looks at him in astonishment.*) Your father was here, in rags, unkempt, dirty, indecent. Still you must respect him.

Polja. Indeed yes . . . why do you tell me to?

Bezsemenov. You must understand. Your father is a homeless wanderer but you must not act against his will. . . Some day you may understand what it means,—a father. All . . . are without feeling. You, for instance are a poor defenceless girl . . . you must be modest and kind towards everyone. . . But now you begin to permit yourself discussions . . . ape the educated. . . Hm—yes, and now you are going to marry . . . while here is a woman who has almost committed suicide.

Polja. I don't understand what you are saying . . . and what you are saying it for.

Bezsemenov (losing the thread of the conversation, angrily). Understand! Think! That is what I am saying it for . . . who are you . . . and still you are going to marry. And my daughter. . . But what are you standing there for? Go to the kitchen . . . do something. . . I will wait here . . . go. (*POLJA is astonished and moves away.*) Wait a minute, lately I—your father—I talked to your father roughly.

Polja. What for?

Bezsemenov. None of your business. Go now . . . go! (*POLJA goes out, bewildered.* *BEZSEME NOV approaches the door of TATIANA'S room softly and peeps in.* *HELENA enters, pushing him aside.*)

Helena. Don't go in. She seems to be asleep. She must not be troubled.

Bezsemenov. Hm. . . Everybody troubles us and it is all right, but when we want to trouble you, it is out of the question.

Helena (astonished). What are you talking about? She is very ill.

Bezsemenov. I know. I know it all. (*Exit to entry.*)

Helena (Looks after him shrugging her shoulders, goes to the window, and rests on the couch, her hands behind her neck. She sinks into a reverie and her eyes close, a smile illuminating her features. *PETER enters*

gloomily. He shakes his head as though he would throw something off. Sees HELENA and stops.

Helena (without opening her eyes). Who is there?

Peter. Why do you laugh? It is strange to see a smiling face after all this.

Helena (looks at him). You are angry? Exhausted? Poor, poor boy. . I feel sorry for you.

Peter (sits near her). And I feel sorry for myself.

Helena. You must go somewhere. . .

Peter. Yes, I must. What do I stay here for? I am getting tired of this life.

Helena. How would you like to live? Tell me. . I have often asked you. . but you have never answered. . .

Peter. It is difficult to be sincere.

Helena. Even with me.

Peter. Even with you. Because I don't know how you would like what I would. . tell you. Often it seems to me that you are. . .

Helena. That I? Am what?

Peter. That you are good.

Helena. I am, very good to you, my dear boy.

Peter (ardently). I am no boy, no! I have done a lot of thinking. But listen, do you enjoy all this commotion, with Nil, Zwetahyeva, Schishkin, and the rest of that noisy crowd? Do you believe that these readings of scientific books, these theatrical performances for workmen, all this bustle, these amusements, rational enough in themselves, are important matters, things to be lived for? Tell me. . .

Helena. My dear boy, I am not an educated woman. I can't judge because I am not a serious person, but I like them all. . Nil too, and Schishkin. . They are all so gay, always trying to do something. . I like exuberant fellows, I feel that way myself. . But why do you ask?

Peter. It all sickens me. If they like to live in this way, if they find pleasure in it let them; I shall not stand in their way, but they should let me live in the way in which I want to live. Why do they attach to their manner such a particular importance? Why do they call me a coward, an egotist?

Helena (shakes his head with her hand). They have tortured him . . he is tired. . .

Peter. No I am not tired, I am only irritated. . I have the right to live as I please. . I have that right.

Helena (playing with his hair). That is another question too difficult for me. I only know that I live as I can and do as I please. If anybody advises me, for example, to go to a nunnery—I won't go—then if I should be seized and compelled, I would run and jump into the river.

Peter. You spend more time with them than with me. They please you more than I please you, but I want to say that they are a lot of empty hogsheads.

Helena (wonderingly). What?

Peter. Empty hogsheads. . there is a fable about hogsheads.

Helena. Ah yes, I know. . but that means that I am empty too.

Peter. Oh no, you are not, you are every inch alive, you are like a brook which refreshes one. . .

Helena. Ah, then you think I am cold.

Peter. Don't joke, I beg of you! This moment is . . but you laugh? Why? Am I so amusing. . I want to live. . I want to live. . after my own way, after my own understanding. . as I wish. . .

Helena. Go ahead, nobody hinders you.

Peter. Yes, there is somebody, there is something. When I think, now I know the way one must live. . with absolute independence. . it seems to me that some one cries out to me, 'no, it cannot be so.'

Helena. That is conscience.

Peter. Where does conscience come in. . I contemplate no crime. . I would only be free, I would only say. . .

Helena (leaning towards him). That should not be expressed so. It must be more simply said. I will help you my poor boy. You should not turn such simple matters into such confusion.

Peter. Helena Nikolahyevna—you torture me with your joking. It is cruel. I only want to say that I stand before you just as I am. . .

Helena. That is not perfect either!

Peter. Obviously I am a weak man. . this life is beyond my power. . I feel how trite it is—but cannot change anything, I can't force in anything new. . I will go somewhere, live alone.

Helena (shakes his head with both her hands). Repeat after me, 'I love you,' 'I love you.'

Peter. Oh yes, yes! Indeed no!. . You are joking.

Helena. Really, I am in earnest, and I have long ago decided to marry you. It may not be for the best. . but I have an immense desire to do it. . .

Peter. But. . how happy I am. . I love you. . as (*Behind the door TATIANA'S moans are heard. Peter springs up and looks around nervously. HELENA rises quietly.*)

Peter (softly). That's Tanja! And we. . sit here. . .

Helena (goes by him to TATIANA'S room). We have done nothing wrong.

Tatiana (without). A drink. . give me something to drink.

Helena. I am coming. (*Goes to TATIANA, leaving PETER with a smile. He stands looking dumbly before himself, his head in his hands.*)

Akoolina Ivanovna (putting her head through the door and whispering aloud). Petja! Petja! Where are you?

Peter. Here.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Come to dinner.

Peter. I don't care to. I am not coming.

Helena (entering from TATIANA'S room). He will go with me.

Akoolina Ivanovna (with a sour face, retires).

Peter (rushes to HELENA). How miserable it has turned out! She lying there sick. . and we—and we—

Helena. Let us go. In the theatre the most sombre drama is followed by the lightest comedy. How much more necessary in life then. . (PETER approaches her and she takes his hand.)

Tatiana (moaning hoarsely). Lena. . Lena. . (POLJA hurries in.).

ACT IV

The same room. Evening. A lamp on the table is lit. POLJA is arranging the tea cups and TATIANA, convalescent, sits on the couch in the half darkened corner. ZWETAHYEVA sits on a chair near her.

Tatiana (softly and reproachfully). Do you think, that if I could, I would not look at life with the pleasure you find in it? I dearly wish that I could, but I was born without credence in my heart and I have learned to think.

Zwetahyeva (softly). You think too much, my love. You must agree that it is not worth while to be too wise. A little bit of reasoning is a wholesome thing but if life is not to be too harsh and monotonous a man must have some phantasy. . now and then, but not too often; we must look ahead into the future. . . (POLJA listens attentively to ZWETAHYEVA and laughs thoughtfully).

Tatiana. What is before us—to be—

Zwetahyeva. Anything you want—

Tatiana. But you must then devise it for yourself.

Zwetahyeva. One must believe in it.

Tatiana. In what?

Zwetahyeva. In your own dreams. You know when I look into the eyes of my little pupils, I think of the future. For instance, there is Novikov. He will soon graduate and enter the gymnasium, then to the university. . He will become a doctor it seems to me, he is so solid, kind and attentive. . with a great high brow,. . such a loving heart. . always at work without thought of profit to himself, a good fellow in every way. . . People will love and respect him, I am sure. . and he will have a bloody recollection of his childhood days when anything reminds him of his former teacher Zwetahyeva and how she broke his nose when playing with him at recess. Maybe he won't remember it. . but it is all the

same. . yes he will remember me, he loves me a lot. . then there is an inattentive boy shaggy, disheveled, Klovov, a fisty quarrelsome brat, a rip, eternally quarreling and fighting. He is an orphan and lives with his uncle, a night watchman. He is almost a beggar—but proud and confident. I think he will become a journalist. Ah, how many interesting little chaps I have there! And involuntarily I find myself thinking of what they will do in life. It is wonderfully interesting to try to imagine how they will live. You know Tatiana, it is trifling, but if you only realized what pleasure it is!

Tatiana. And you? What becomes of you? Your pupils will live. . and live prosperously. . but by that time you may be. . .

Zwetahyeva. Dead! Ah no. I want to live long.

Polja (softly and tenderly, with a sigh). How sweet you are, Masha! And how good!

Zwetahyeva (laughing at POLJA). Our linnet is singing. . . You know, Tatiana, I am not sentimental, but when I think of the inhabitants of the future, a sweet sadness comes over me. . it is like a resolute autumnal day. . in the fall there are such days. . a fiery sun in the bright heavens flooding the heart, great transparent distances, clear, stimulating, but not cold; warm, but not hot. . .

Tatiana. All these. . are tales. . I admit though, that you, Nil, Schishkin, and your kind can make life out of such dreams. . I unfortunately cannot.

Zwetahyeva. No, wait! Not merely fancies. . .

Tatiana. Nothing ever seemed to me to be fixed. . nothing more than that this is me and that the wall, one and the same. And when I say 'yes,' or 'no,' I do not say it from conviction, but simply to give an answer, and when, sometimes I say 'no' I immediately reflect, question myself, and say perhaps I meant 'yes.'

Zwetahyeva. You love reflection. . but look at yourself more closely. Don't you find anything entertaining in such a double capacity of the soul? And if you knew what credence means . . perhaps you are merely afraid to believe. . belief compels. . .

Tatiana. I don't know. . I don't know. . make me believe. . You cause others to believe you. (*Laughs softly.*) And I always pity the people who believe you. You are deceiving them. Life will always be just the same . . inscrutable . . narrow, . . always the same.

Zwetahyeva (laughing). Are you sure. . perhaps not.

Polja (to herself). I say no.

Tatiana. What did you say?

Polja. I say it shall not always be so.

Zwetahyeva. Good for you, little bird.

Tatiana. Another of your unfortunates. . trustful creatures. Ask

her why, why it will change. Question her!

Polja (softly as she approaches). This is how it is. Only a part of mankind really lives as yet. Few know life, multitudes have no time to live at all. They must work for their bread, ceaselessly, but when they. . .

Schishkin (enters the room quickly). Good evening. (*To POLJA.*) Greeting fair haired daughter of King Duncan.

Polja. What? Which king?

Schishkin. Aha, I have caught you. I see now that you have not read your Heine although you have had the book more than two weeks. . . Good day, Tatiana Wassilyevna.

Tatiana (giving him her hand). It is not the book she has in mind now. . . She is going to marry.

Schishkin. Ah! Whom?

Zwetahyeva. Nil.

Schishkin. Ah. . . luck to you. . . but it is not very smart to get married, especially under prevailing conditions.

Tatiana. Oh please don't. . . you have been over it so often.

Schishkin. Good! I'll be still. Besides I have no time. (*To ZWETAHYEVA.*) Are you coming with me? Is Peter there?

Polja. He is upstairs.

Schishkin. Hm. . . No I'll not go. . . But I would like to ask you Tatiana Wassilyevna as a favor . . . or you Polja, tell him that I . . . once more. You know. . . that the tutorship at Prochorov's is open. . .

Zwetahyeva. Again! Already; you have bad luck.

Tatiana. Have you had a quarrel?

Schishkin. Not strictly speaking. I contained myself.

Zwetahyeva. But what was it about. You were full of praise of Prochorov. . .

Schishkin. Alas yes. . . the devil take me. To tell the truth he is preferable to lots of people, except that he is boastful. He is not stupid, but gossips and in general (*Heartily with unexpected emphasis.*) he is a gigantic pig.

Tatiana. I hardly think Peter will find you anything else now.

Schishkin. No, and I suppose he will be furious with me.

Zwetahyeva. But what happened between you and Prochorov?

Schishkin. What do you imagine? He is an anti-Semite.

Tatiana. What is that to you?

Schishkin. Realize how shameful that is, how unworthy of an intelligent man. And above all he is bourgeois. Take this instance: His house maid went to Sunday School! Excellent! He himself preached me a tiresome sermon upon the benefits of Sunday Schools, although I had not requested the favor. He bragged about being one of the first instigators of the movement for the organization of the Sunday School. Lately he

came home on Sunday and horror of horrors, the house maid didn't open the door,—it was the nurse. Where is Scasha? At Sunday School. Aha! And he forbade her going any more. What should that be called? (TATIANA *shrugs her shoulders*.)

Zwetahyeva. As you say, he talks a great deal with his mouth.

Schishkin. Generally speaking, Peter always finds me a position with a charlatan.

Tatiana (dryly). I remember how you praised the treasurer. . .

Schishkin. Certainly, and a splendid old gentleman, but a numismatic! He stuck a great plateful of old copper pieces under my nose and began talking about Cæsars, diocesans, different Pharaohs with chariots, and it was too much for me. I listened to it as long as my strength held out, then I said: 'Listen, Wikentey Wassilyevich—from my point of view all that is nonsense. Any old stone in the world is older than all your platefuls together.' He got very grouchy then. 'What,' he said, 'I have wasted fifteen years of my life on nonsense.' I answered in the affirmative. When pay day came I was short half a ruble. Evidently he had docked me for the benefit of his collection. . . But all this is nonsense—but as for Prokorov, I have a bad reputation. (*Hastily to ZWETAHYEVA.*) Come Mary Nikitishua, let us go—it is time. . .

Zwetahyeva. I am ready. Au revoir Tanja!

Tatiana. To-morrow is Sunday. . .

Zwetahyeva. I will be over early.

Tatiana. Thanks. I really feel that I am some sort of creeping ivy under your feet, without beauty, without attraction, joyless, I don't know why. I don't like people, I seem to get tangled up with them.

Schishkin. What unwholesome thoughts.

Zwetahyeva. It is distressing to listen to you.

Tatiana. No, listen! I realize that I have comprehended the cruel logic of life . . . he who cannot believe in anything cannot live . . . he must perish. . .

Zwetahyeva (smiling). Is that so? Perhaps not.

Tatiana. You laugh at me. Is it worth while?

Zwetahyeva. No, Tanja, no, my dear. It is only your illness, your weariness that speaks so. . . not you yourself. Now, au revoir. Don't think us cruel and malicious.

Tatiana. Go. . . goodbye.

Schishkin (to POLJA). Say, when are you going to read Heine? Ah yes, you are going to marry —hm! I could read you a lecture on that subject. . . but never mind, good bye. (*Exit following ZWETAHYEVA. Pause.*)

Polja. The evening mass will soon be over. Shall I have the samovar brought in?

Tatiana. I hardly think father and mother want tea now. But do as you please. (*Pause.*) It used to be that the stillness tired me, but now I am glad it is so quiet here.

Polja. Isn't it time for you to take your prescription?

Tatiana. Not yet. There has been so much bustle and confusion here the last few days. And this fellow Schishkin, how noisy he always is. . .

Polja (approaches her). But he is a nice man.

Tatiana. Oh yes. . . though foolish.

Polja. But he is brave and whenever he sees injustice done he takes the part of the oppressed. This house maid for example, who notices the lives of house maids and the rest of the servants of the rich? And if it is noticed who tries to help them?

Tatiana (without looking at Polja). Tell me, Polja, aren't you afraid to become Nil's wife?

Polja (amazed). What of? No, I am not afraid.

Tatiana. No? I would be afraid. I ask because. . . I love you! You are not like Nil. You are a simple girl while he has studied and read. He is . . . a man of education. He may grow tired of you. Have you thought of that Polja?

Polja. Bah! I know that he loves me.

Tatiana (annoyed). How can you be sure?

Polja (to TETEREV who brings the samovar in). Thanks, I will get the milk. (*Exit.*)

Teterev (in glooming countenance, showing effects of the previous night). I was passing the kitchen and Stepanida implored me 'Fatherchen, dear, carry the samovar in, and if you ever need it I'll mix you a glass of hunyadi and seltzer.' I couldn't withstand that seduction, for I am a guzzler.

Tatiana. Have you just come from evening mass?

Peterev. I did not go to-day. My top-piece is cracking. How are you? Do you feel better?

Tatiana. Very well, thanks. I've been asked at least twenty times to-day. I would be quite well if there was less noise. This eternal running about annoys me, everybody flying hither and thither. Father angry with Nil, mother sighing, and I lying here, can discover no meaning in it . . . in what we call life. . .

Teterev. But still it is interesting. I am one of those who stand apart and observe life. I live for the sake of curiosity, and I find it rather interesting here.

Tatiana. But you are not a crank I am sure. What is interesting here?

Teterev. It is interesting to see how people tune themselves up for

living. I enjoy hearing musicians at their instruments in the theatre tuning up. The ear takes in a multitude of notes, and now and then a nice passage. And we want to hear what the musicians will play, and we like to forecast which of them will become a soloist, and what he will select for his piece. And so here, everybody is tuning himself up.

Tatiana. In the theatre, yes, the leader comes with his baton and the musicians play some old worn out thing, soullessly. And here? . . . these? what are they even capable of playing? I do not know.

Teterev. Something fortissimo. . .

Tatiana. We shall see. (*Pause. TETEREV smokes his pipe.*) Why do you smoke a pipe and not cigarettes?

Teterev. It is pleasanter. I am, to tell the truth—a tramp, and spend the greater part of the year on the go. I will be off again soon, when the winter gets well settled.

Tatiana. Where to?

Teterev. That I do not know—but it makes no difference.

Tatiana. You will freeze somewhere—drunk.

Teterev. When I am afoot, I don't drink. And if I should freeze, what of it? Better freeze on the road than rot in a stall.

Tatiana. Are you driving at me?

Teterev (springs up frightened). God forbid, I am not a beast. What are you saying?

Tatiana (smilingly). Don't disturb yourself. I do not feel insulted. I have lost the ability to feel pain. (*Bitterly.*) They all know that nothing can hurt me. Pelagia, Helena, Masha, they all behave like the rich who care not a snap how a pauper feels when he sees them devouring costly viands.

Teterev (knitting his brow, and speaking through his teeth). Why this self humiliation? One must respect himself.

Tatiana. All right! Let us drop the subject. (*Pause.*) Tell me something of yourself . . . you never speak of yourself . . . why?

Tatiana. Oh no! Tell me why you live in such a strange way.

Teterev. The theme is considerable, but not particularly interesting. I regard you as a gifted . . . a talented man . . . what has happened to you?

Teterev (with a sarcastic smile). What has happened to me? Oh, that would be a long wearisome story, if I told it in my own words:

‘For happiness I sallied forth,
A beggar I returned,
Hatless, hopeless, shirtless,
By the future, spurned.’

The description is too mild for my experience, though brief enough. I cannot forego adding that in Russia a drunkard lives more comfortably and quietly than your sober, honest, useful citizen.* (*PETER and NIL enter.*)

* Gorki had difficulty with the authorities over this passage.—*Translator.*

Only men of merciless pursuit, firm as swords may make a way for themselves. . . Ah, Nil, where do you come from?

Nil. From the depot . . . after a battle with the blockheaded depot master . . . after a brilliant victory.

Peter. They will kick you out of your job pretty soon.

Nil. Then I will find another one.

Tatiana. Do you know Peter . . . Schishkin has had a quarrel with Prokorov and hasn't the courage to tell you.

Peter (angrily). The devil take him. That is simply amazing. And what a ridiculous position he puts me in with Prokorov after the trouble I had to get him the place. Now it won't be possible for me to be of service to some other friend.

Nil. Don't get angry. Find out first who is to blame.

Peter. I know.

Tatiana. Schishkin didn't like Prokorov's Jew-baiting.

Nil (laughing). Ah, my dear fighting cocks.

Peter. Well of course you like it. What respect do you have for other people's principles. You are like a wild animal.

Nil. Wait! Can you, yourself, have respect for a Jew-baiter?

Peter. At any rate, I wouldn't have the right to spring at a man's throat.

Nil. But I would.

Teterev (looking from one to the other). Let her go, boys.

Peter. Who gives you such a right?

Nil. Right is not given, it must be taken or else the encroaching rights of others will crush us.

Peter. Wait!

Tatiana (disturbed). You are beginning your endless arguments again. Do you never grow tired?

Peter (containing himself). Pardon me, I'll not do it any more, but this chap Schishkin almost—

Tatiana. I understand—he is—foolish.

Nil. The boy is all right. He won't let other people step on his corns, first. It is a good plan to have such self-respect.

Tatiana. So much kiddishness you mean.

Nil. No. I don't mean that, but call it kiddishness, it is still admirable.

Peter. Ridiculous!

Nil. When a man throws away his only slice of bread because an unsympathetic patron pushes it at him, it shows—

Peter. Simply that he was not hungry enough. I know that you will argue the point, but at the same time you are a sort of school boy—always trying to prove to father that you have no respect for him. . .

Why do you do so?

Nil. Must I hide it?

Teterev. My child, politeness necessitates lying.

Peter. What sort of sense is there in such—what—

Nil. We shall never be able to understand each other. . . There is no use talking. . . Everything your father says and does is disgusting to me.

Peter. It may disgust me too, but I control myself. You irritate him and he takes his spite on us, my sister and I.

Tatiana. Enough! Enough! It is so tiresome. (*NIL glances at her and steps aside to the table.*)

Peter. (*To TATIANA.*) Does our conversation disturb you?

Tatiana. It tires me, always and forever the same thing. . .

Polja (*enters with a mug of milk in her hand, sees NIL smiling pensively to himself; to the others heartily*). Look, what a fine fellow!

Teterev. What are you laughing about?

Nil. I? It just occurred to me how I lectured the head of the depot. Life is very interesting—very interesting.

Teterev (*in a deep voice*). Amen.

Peter (*shrugging his shoulders*). Certainly astonishing . . . were these optimists born blind?

Nil. Whether I am an optimist or not is of no importance. I like to live (*rises and walks about*). It is really a remarkable pleasure to live on the earth.

Teterev. Yes, it is remarkable.

Peter. If you are serious, you are both remarkable.

Nil. And you—what shall you be called? It is no secret that you are loved and are in love. Why doesn't that start you singing and dancing? It does not infuse you with joy. (*From behind the samovar, POLJA looks at the others proudly. TATIANA shifts about restlessly in order to get a view of NIL's face. TETEREV, smilingly, knocks the ashes from his pipe.*)

Peter. You forget the circumstances: first as a student, I dare not marry, in the second place, it means a battle with my parents, and thirdly . . .

Nil. Heavenly fathers, what does it all amount to? But if it is all so, there is only one thing left for you to do—flee to the desert. (*POLJA smiles*).

Tatiana. Don't be a clown, Nil.

Nil. No, Petrucha, no! To live is a great occupation, even when you are not in love. Even with a rattle trap locomotive on an Autumn night, in wind and rain or in winter with a blizzard around your ears, everything piled up with snow, shut in by the darkness . . . tiresome, difficult, dangerous, you will admit . . . yet it has its own charm—truly. It is only at times that I fail to find anything agreeable in life: when I

and other good people are commanded by pigs, thieves, and fools. But they won't be in power forever, they will disappear like a boil on a healthy neck. No time table was ever made not subject to change.

Peter. I have heard your sentiments frequently. We shall see how life answers them.

Nil. I will compel the answer which I desire. Don't try to frighten me. I know better than you and at closer hand that life is hard and cruel, that rude, unjust authority prevails with crushing dominion. I know it all, it is not pleasant, but it arouses me. I challenge this order of things. I realize that life is a serious thing . . . that it will require all my readiness and strength for its reorganization. I know too, that I am no hero, but only a sound honest fellow—yet I say—well and good! We shall conquer. I shall spend all the strength of my heart and soul but I will get into the very center of life's problems and conflicts. I shall knead the dough and stand in another's way . . . that is the joy of living.

Teterev (smiling). That is the contents of the deepest wisdom, the pith of our whole philosophy. All other philosophy be damned.

Helena (at the door). What are you shouting about . . . and throwing your hands in the air?

Nil (rushing to her). Lady, you will understand me. I have just been singing a song of glorification of life. Confirm me, life is intoxicating!

Polja (softly). Life is good to live.

Helena. Who denies it?

Nil (to POLJA). Ah you . . . my tender one.

Helena. Please! No spooning when I am around.

Peter. The devil knows what the matter is. He acts like a drunkard.

(*TATIANA leans her head back on the sofa, lifts hands slowly and covers her face.*)

Helena. Just a minute. Are you ready for some tea, gentlemen? I came to invite you, but I will stay here, it is so jolly (*to TETEREV*). Only you, wise raven . . . you fighting cock.

Teterev. I feel gay too. . . I am only silent when I am gay. When things are tiresome I let everybody know about it.

Nil. Like all great, crafty, ill-tempered dogs.

Helena. I have never seen you either gay or sad, but always philosophizing. Think, gentlemen, only think, Tanja, he has been instructing me in philosophy. Yesterday he preached to me about a certain law of comprehensive fundamentation. . . Ah, I have already forgotten how this astonishing law really ran . . . in what terms. . .

Teterev (laughing). Ah, there is nothing without fundamentation, because it has existence.

Helena. Will you listen? All the deep things I know about. . .

You see, gentlemen that this law stands in representation, this term representation is highly philosophical, in representation of something like an oak, because it has four roots . . . is that correct?

Teterev. I don't dare dispute it.

Helena. Of course not. The first root, but perhaps not root number one—is the law of the comprehensive fundamentation of existence. . . Existence is substance in formations. I, for example, am substance which not without justification has taken the form of a woman, but which without any fundamentation shall be robbed of volition. Existence is external but substance in formations possesses only transitory resistance—then adieu. Is that correct?

Teterev. It is all correct, it will answer.

Helena. Besides I know that there is a causal copula, further an *a priori* and an *a post criori*—but who they are I have forgotten. And if all his remarkable business does not make me bald-headed I shall have to be very proud. But what is most interesting to me about all this philosophy is why Terentey Chrisanfovich talks philosophy to me at all!

Teterev. Firstly, because it gives me great pleasure to look at you. . .

Helena. Thanks: secondly, because it is not interesting.

Teterev. Secondly, because man only escapes prevarication when he philosophizes.

Helena. I don't understand a word. Now, Tanja, how do you feel? (*Without waiting for her answer.*) Peter . . . Wassilyevich . . . what are you discouraged over?

Peter. Over myself.

Nil. And the rest?

Helena. You know. . . I have the greatest desire to-day to sing . . . what a shame that this is Saturday night and the evening mass not over yet. (*BEZSEME NOV and AKOOLINA IVANOVNA enter.*) Ah, here come our pilgrims. Good evening!

Bezsemenov. Our respects to you.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Good day, only we have seen you before today.

Helena. Oh yes, I forgot all about it . . . he was in . . . was it hot in the church?

Bezsemenov. We don't go to church to measure the climate.

Helena (confused). Of course not. I did not mean to ask that, I only meant were there many there.

Akoolina Ivanovna. We did not count them mother.

Polja (to BEZSEME NOV). Will you have a cup of tea?

Bezsemenov. We will have our supper first . . . go and get things ready. (*Exit AKOOLINA IVANOVNA sniffing her nose. All are silent. TATIANA gets up with HELENA's assistance and goes to the table. NIL sits at TATIANA's place. PETER walks about the room and TETEREV*

from his seat by the piano smilingly observes them. POLJA is at the samovar and BEZSEMENOV sits on the chest in the corner.)

Bezsemenov. People are getting to be very thievish now-a-days. Astonishing . . . when we went to church to-day, I laid a small plank down in front of the gate so that people could keep out of the mud. When we came back somebody had swiped it. There is too much lewdness now. (*Pause.*) When I was a young man there were fewer crooks . . . people committed more robberies then because they had mighty souls . . . they were ashamed to burden their consciences with such small matters. (*On the street, singing and accordion playing.*) Every Saturday, and they are singing. (*The singing is nearer and two voices are distinguishable.*) Probably working men . . . they get through their work, go to a bar-room, drink up their wages and now they tear out their throats. (*The singing is directly under the window and NLI presses his face against the pane and peers out.*) So it goes for a year or two and then they are ready to become vagabonds and crooks. . . .

Nil. It seems that it is Pertshichin.

Akoolina Ivanovna (*in the door*). Father, go to supper!

Bezsemenov (*rises*). Pertshichin . . . that is another fellow . . . leading a useless life. (*Exit.*)

Helena (*glancing after him*). It will be pleasanter upstairs with me.

Nil. You have talked very wittily with the old folks.

Helena. He invariably confuses me. He does not like me and it is unpleasant, even insulting, why doesn't he like me?

Peter. After all he is a good old man—but he has great self-esteem.

Nil. And then he is a bit avaricious—and a bit malicious. . . .

Polja. Don't talk about a man behind his back. . . . It is not nice.

Nil. And it is not nice to be avaricious either!

Tatiana (*dryly*). Don't! Don't! I suggest that we drop such subjects without more discussion. Father may come back at any moment . . . and for three days he has not done any quarrelling . . . and has tried to be friendly towards everybody.

Peter. And that is not an easy matter for him.

Tatiana. We must appreciate it. He is old. He is not to blame for being born before our time, and that he cannot think as we think (*becoming excited*). How much cruelty there is in people. How rude and merciless they are! We are taught to love each other . . . we are taught goodness . . . and . . .

Nil (*imitating her tone*). And then they jump on our backs and ride us to death. . . . (*HELENA bursts out laughing. POLJA and TETEREV smile and PETER goes to NIL as though he would say something to him. TATIANA shakes her head reproachfully.*)

Bezsemenov (enters, giving HELENA an unfriendly look).
Pelagia, your father is there in the kitchen . . go tell him—to come some other time when he is sober. Yes, oh say, 'Daddy dear, go home' or something of the kind. (*Exit POLJA followed by NIL.*)

Bezsemenov (as NIL goes). You too . . go and take a look at your future . . hm . . (*Breaks off and sits at the table.*) What are you all so still about? I notice, that as soon as I cross the threshold, everybody shuts his mouth.

Tatiana. We were not saying anything before you came in.

Bezsemenov (giving HELENA a sidelong glance). And what are you laughing about?

Peter. Oh. . . Over some of Nil's nonsense.

Bezsemenov. Always Nil! Everything begins and ends with Nil. . I know. . .

Tatiana. Shall I pour you some tea?

Bezsemenov. Yes.

Helena. Let me have it, Tanja, I will. . .

Bezsemenov. No! No! Don't trouble yourself, my daughter will serve me.

Peter. I don't see what difference it makes. . Tanja does not feel well. . .

Bezsemenov. I have not asked you what you think about the matter. If strangers are more to you than the members of your own family. . .

Peter. Father, are you not ashamed of yourself?

Tatiana. Beginning again! Peter, be satisfied.

Helena (with a forced smile). It is not worth while. (*The door is softly opened and PERTSHICHIN, a little drunk appears.*)

Pertshichin. Wassili Wassilyevich, I came here . . you went away from there. . But I have come here after you.

Bezsemenov (without looking at him). As long as you are here . . take some tea.

Pertshichin. I don't need any tea—drink him yourself. . I have come to converse. . .

Bezsemenov. What kind of conversation?. . This is all foolishness. .

Pertshichin. Well, foolishness. (*Laughs.*) You are a queer customer (*NIL enters and remains at the sideboard regarding BEZSEME NOV severely.*)

Pertshichin. Four days long I have intended to come to see you . . and now I am here. . .

Bezsemenov. Very polite of you.

Pertshichin. Yes, you really find it so, Wassili Wassilyevich? You are a wise man, a rich man. . . I have come to have a talk with your conscience.

Peter (approaching NIL, softly). What did you let him in for?

Nil. Never mind. . it is nothing to you.

Peter. The devil knows what you are always doing. . .

Pertshichin (*above PETER'S voice*). Old man! I know you a long while. . .

Bezsemenov (*aroused*). What do you want?

Pertshichin. Tell me— what did you throw me out of the house for, just lately. .I have. . thought it over and over. . and can't make it out. . Tell me brother. I come to you in charity not in hate. . .

Bezsemenov. You come like a fool.

Tatiana (*going to her room*). Peter, help me. . or no, call Polja. .
(*Exit PETER.*)

Pertshichin. Here is Polja—my dear daughter! My innocent bird. . Did you do it on account of her. . because she wrenched Tatiana's bridegroom away?

Tatiana. What foolishness! What meanness. . .

Bezsemenov (*rises from his chair slowly*). Listen, Pertshichin, for the second time. . .

Helena (*softly, to NIL*). Take him away, they will fall to hair pulling. . .

Nil. I prefer not to take him away.

Pertshichin. A second time. . you wont throw me out, Wassili Wassilyevich! I don't deserve to be thrown out. Polja! I love her. She is my own brave daughter, but I do not approve brother, of her taking away another woman's bridgroom. That is not nice. . .

Tatiana. Lena! I want to go to your room. (*HELENA assists her, and as they pass NIL, TATIANA speaks to him half aloud.*) Shame on you! Take him out!

Bezsemenov (*making an effort to control himself*). Pertshichin, shut up! Sit down and be still!. . or go home! (*POLJA enters, PETER following her.*)

Peter (*to POLJA*). Quiet yourself, don't get worked up, I beg of you. .

Polja. Wassili Wassilyevich, what did you turn my father out for?

Bezsemenov. (*Looks severely from one to the other.*)

Pertshichin (*threatening POLJA with his finger*). Hush! Say nothing, daughter! Tanja poisoned herself, do you know why? Listen! Wassili Wassilyevich! You see, I will judge adroitly, honestly, quieting the conscience, it's very simple with me.

Polja. Wait father!

Peter. Pardon me, Polja.

Nil (*to PETER*). Rather be still!

Bezsemenov. Listen to me Pelagia, you are too impertinent, that is what you are.

Pertshichin. She. . no she is not. .

Bezsemenov. Be still! I begin to understand it. . Who does this house belong to? Who is master here? Who lays down the law here? Who judges?

Pertshichin. I will judge everything and every body. . according to legal procedure. Don't take anything that does not belong to you. Number one. If you take it, give it back, number two.

Peter (to PERTSHICHIN). Stop! . . Come to my room. . .

Pertshichin. Don't Peter—I can't endure you! You are proud and empty, don't know anything not even what sanitation is. I was told about it brother. (*PETER takes him by the arm.*) Don't touch me. . .

Nil (to PETER). No, don't touch him. .

Bezsemenov (to NIL). You want to let bloodhounds loose, do you?

Nil. No, I only want an explanation, to understand the matter. What was Pertshichin's fault? Why was he ordered out? . . And where does Polja come in? . .

Bezsemenov. Shall we be cross questioned?

Nil. Suppose we do. . not unheard of. . you are a man. . and I too. .

Bezsemenov (angrily). No, you are not a man, you are a disease, a wild beast. . .

Pertshichin. Hush! Always speak gently, everything must be done tenderly, without regret.

Bezsemenov (to POLJA). And you little viper. . beggar.

Nil (through his teeth). Don't be yelling. . .

Bezsemenov. What! Out with you, you snake. I have brought you up, fed you on my blood and sweat. . .

Tatiana (from her room). Papa! Papa!

Peter (to NIL). Are you satisfied! Ah, you. . shame on you. . .

Polja (softly). Don't you dare to halloo at me. I am not your slave. You have no right to insult me. You must tell me why you turned my father out of the house!

Nil (quietly). Yes, I insist too. . This is not an asylum for imbeciles, everyone is responsible for what he does.

Bezsemenov (containing himself, but wrathful). Don't tempt me too far! Look out for yourself! Dependent! Whom I have brought up.

Nil. Don't be throwing into my face your bread that I have eaten. . I will make up all that I have devoured.

Bezsemenov. You have. . devoured my soul. . murderer.

Polja (takes NIL's arm). Let us go. . together. . away.

Bezsemenov. Go, you crawling serpent. . It is all your fault, it is all on account of you. You have stung my daughter—You—on account of you my daughter.

Pertshichin. Wassili Wassilyevich, gently, justly, remember your conscience.

Tatiana (cries). Father! That is not true. Peter! What is the matter with you. Why don't you answer for me? (*Appears in the door of her room and with outstretched arms crosses helplessly to the centre.*) Peter, it is all. . . so unnecessary, ah my God; Terentey Chrisanfovich, tell them! Tell them! Polja! For God's sake! Go! Go! What is it all for? (*All run about wildly. TETEREV with a sardonic grin rises. BEZSEME NOV shrinks before TATIANA and PETER supports her, looking about in alarm.*)

Polja (to NIL). Let us go!

Nil. Good. . . (*To BEZSEME NOV.*) Well, we are going. . . I am sorry there is so much loud noise about it.

Bezsemenov. Go! Go away! Take her along!

Nil. I shall never come back.

Polja (with trembling voice, aloud). To accuse me on account of Tanja. . . Could it be possible? Is it my fault . . . shameless thing. . .

Bezsemenov (angrily). Will you ever go?

Nil. More gently. . .

Pertshichin. Don't quarrel, children. Do everything in mildness.

Polja. Good bye. . . Come, father.

Nil (to PERTSHICHIN). With us.

Pertshichin. No, I don't care to go with you. We have nothing in common. Terentey. . . I go my own way. . . Nobody accuses me. . .

Teterov. Let's go to my room.

Polja. Go! Go! Before they throw you out!

Pertshichin. No, . . . I don't go . . . Terentey. . . I see through her. . .

Peter (to NIL). Get out—the devil take you.

Nil. We go! But what is the matter? . . .

Polja. Let us go! (*Exit both.*)

Bezsemenov (calling after them). Come here again! Don't forget your manners.

Peter. Stop, father! Stop! that's enough.

Tatiana. Papa, dear papa, don't bellow so!

Bezsemenov. Wait!

Pertshichin. Now they are gone. . . that is good. Let them go.

Bezsemenov. I should have given them some advice while they were going. I gave them to eat, I gave them to drink. (*To PERTSHICHIN.*) And you, you old scamp, blockhead! come here chattering. . . What do you want? What . . .

Peter. Papa! Enough. . .

Pertshichin. Wassili Wassilyevich! Don't explode. . . I respect you, you comical old owl. I am foolish but I understand the argument. . .

Bezsemenov (sitting on the sofa). I must. . . collect my thoughts. . .

don't understand. . what has happened! Suddenly like a fire in summer breaking out in some overheated spot. . One thing, I can't see how he could say; 'I shall never come back.' Simple, so simple. Ach, you. . no. . I can't believe it.

Teterev (to PERTSHICHIN). What are you still doing here? What do you want?

Pertshichin. Only for the sake of good form. I think it very simple, you see, one—two—all is over. Is she my daughter? She is my daughter, is she? Therefore she must. . (*Stops short.*) No, I am a bad father. She must not do anything. Let her live as she will. . And Tanja, she pains me. . . I am sorry for her, and I am sorry, brother, for all of you. . To tell the truth, you are all fools.

Bezsemenov. Keep still.

Peter. Tanja! Has Helena Nikolahyevna gone?

Helena. (From TATIANA'S room.) I am here. . measuring the medicine.

Bezsemenov. My mind is a blank. . I can't understand anything. Is it true that Nil, really will go away for good?

Akoolina Ivanovna (enters, distressed). What has happened? Nil and Polja are in the kitchen and I was in the closet. . .

Bezsemenov. Did they go?

Akoolina Ivanovna. No. . they were calling for Pertshichin. . Pelagia says, 'Tell father,' she says her lips trembling, 'tell father to come.' Then Nil growled like a dog. 'What is the matter?'

Bezsemenov (gets up). I will go in a minute.

Peter. Don't father. . don't. .

Tatiana. Papa! Please don't do it. . .

Bezsemenov. Don't do what?

Akoolina Ivanovna. What is the matter?

Bezsemenov. Do you understand, Nil has gone away. . for good.

Peter. What of it? Let him go. What is he to you? . . Let him marry. . and have his own household.

Bezsemenov. Ah! So I am then. . to be a stranger to him?

Akoolina Ivanovna. What are you worrying for, father? God have mercy on him, let him go. . we have our own children. . What do you want Pertshichin? Get out, will you?

Pertshichin. My way is not their way.

Bezsemenov. No! Something is wrong here. If you want to go, go! But how? How he went. Ah, what looks he gave me. .

(*HELENA enters from TATIANA'S room.*)

Teterev (takes PERTSHICHIN'S arm and conducts him to the door). Come, we shall have a glass of bourbon.

Pertshichin. Ah, lute of God, you are a serious man. (*Exit PERT-*

SHICHIN and TETEREV.)

Bezsemenov. I knew that he would leave us. . But I did not think it would be in this way. . And that kid, that hired girl was yelling at me. . I will talk to them. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Don't father! They are strangers to us. Who wants their services? . . They are gone, so much the better.

Helena (softly to PETER). Let us go to my room.

Tatiana (to HELENA). I too, take me along. . .

Helena. With pleasure. . Come. . come!

Bezsemenov (who has heard her final words). Where?

Helena. To my room.

Bezsemenov. Who are you calling, Peter?

Helena. Yes. . and Tanja, too. . .

Bezsemenov. Tanja has nothing to do with the question. . But Peter. . he should not go to your room.

Peter. Pardon me father. I am not a child. . I shall go or not go. . as pleases me.

Bezsemenov. No, you shall not go!

Akoolina Ivanovna. Petja, be satisfied.

Helena (in indignation). Allow me, please, Wassili Wassilyevich! . .

Bezsemenov. No, allow me! If you are shameless and respect nobody. . .

Tatiana (crying hysterically). Papa! Stop! Stop that!

Bezsemenov. Keep still! If you are not the master of your own life. . be silent. . wait. . where to go. . .

(HELENA goes to the door).

Peter (follows her and seizes her hand). Wait a moment, just a moment, we must explain matters, right away.

Bezsemenov. Simply listen to me now! Do me the favor to listen to me. Let me understand what this is all about. What is going on? (PERTSHICHIN gaily and with beaming countenance enters followed by TETEREV, also smiling. Both remain at the door looking at each other. PERTSHICHIN winks at BEZSEME NOV, and waves his hand.) Everybody is going away without a word of explanation. Rushing out aimlessly. . it is unreasonable, . . insulting. . Where can you go Peter? . . Who are you? How do you want to live? What do you want to do? (AKOOLINA IVANOVNA sobs. PETER, HELENA and TATIANA are standing before BEZSEME NOV in line. At the words 'where can you go,' TATIANA sinks against the table at which her mother is standing. PERTSHICHIN attracts TETEREV's attention, shakes his head and waves his hands about in the air as if frightening a bird.) I have a right to ask you. . you are young yet. . foolish. For fifty-eight years I have strained my sinew, to do for my children. . .

Peter. So we have heard, hundreds of times. . .

Bezsemenov. Hold your tongue.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Ah! Petja! Petja!

Tatiana. Mama, you don't understand anything about it.

(AKOOLINA IVANOVNA shakes her head).

Bezsemenov. Silence! What can you say? What will you show? . . . Nothing!

Peter. Father, you torture me. . What do you want? What would you have?

Akoolina Ivanovna (aloud, suddenly). No! Wait! Listen to me! I have a heart. . tell me, sonny, what are you doing? What have you made up your mind to do?

Tatiana. This is horrible! Like a dull saw (to her mother). You are tearing my body and soul apart. . .

Akoolina Ivanovna. Ah, I am a saw, your mother. . .

Bezsemenov. Old woman! Wait a minute, he wants to speak, let him.

Helena (to PETER). Enough of this. . I can't stand it any longer. I am going away.

Peter. Wait. . for God's sake. . Everything will be straightened out in a minute or two.

Helena. No—this is a Bedlam.

Teterev. Helena Nikolahyevna— go! Tell them all to go to the devil.

Bezsemenov (to TETEREV). Ah, . . my lord. . you!

Tatiana. Will it ever end? Peter, go!

Peter (almost screaming). Father. . look! Mother! This is my bride. (Pause. All look at PETER. AKOOLINA IVANOVNA throws up her hands and looks at her husband in horror. BEZSEMENOV shrinks back as though he had received a blow, his head sinking. TATIANA sighs deeply and with lifeless arms goes slowly to the piano.)

Teterev (half aloud). He has picked out the right time.

Pertshichin (stepping forward). Well, that's all! The birds are all flying out of your cage. . in different directions, as they fly on ascension day.

Helena (withdraws her arm from PETER'S). Let me go! . . I cannot. . .

Peter (mumbles). Now, everything is clear, all at once.

Bezsemenov (bows ironically to his son). Thanks, my son, for your joyous news.

Akoolina Ivanovna (weeping). You are a lost man, Petenka. . But is she any match for you?

Pertshichin. She! For Peter? What are you blabbering about? Astonishing! What is Peter worth?

Bezsemenov (to HELENA, slowly). I thank you very much, my lady. He is gone now! Just when he should have begun his studies, he is through. Although I knew it before, I felt. . . (*maliciously*). I congratulate you on your booty. Petcha, you shall not have my blessing. (To HELENA.) And you, who have captured him, stolen him—you cat—you—

Helena. Don't you dare!

Peter. Father—you are mad.

Helena. No! Stop Peter! He tells the truth! I have taken him away from you! I did it! I proposed to him! Do you hear you old screech owl! Do you hear! I have torn him away from you. I pity him, for you torture him. You are corruption, you are not flesh and blood. Your love was his ruin. You think—oh, I know it—you think that I want him for my own sake. . . Think what you will. . . Ah, how I hate you!

Tatiana. Lena! Lena! What. . .

Peter. Helena! . . . Let us go.

Helena. Listen! Maybe I shall not marry him. . . You are pleased. It is possible, so don't be frightened before the time comes. . . I will simply live with him—without marrying—but I will never give him back. No! You shall not terrorize him any more! And he will never return to you! Never! Never! Never!

Teterev. Good for you! Good for you! That's a courageous woman!

Akoolina Ivanovna. Heavenly father! What is it? Father!

Peter (*pushes HELENA towards the door*). Go! . . . Go! . . . Go on! (*HELENA goes out, taking PETER with her.*)

Bezsemenov (*looking about helplessly*). So that is how it is. (*Suddenly calls aloud.*) Bring the police. (*Stamps.*) Get out of this house! . . . Not another day. . . ah, you!

Pertshichin (*looks about blankly*). Wassili Wassilish—old socks. What is the matter? What are you yelling about? You should be glad. . .

Tatiana (*goes to her father*). Listen!

Bezsemenov. Ah, you . . . you are left. . . Why don't you go too? You have nobody to go with. You have missed your opportunity. (*TATIANA pulls herself loose and goes quickly to the piano. AKOOLINA IVANOVNA hurries pitifully after her.*)

Pertshichin. Wassili Wassilyevich—stop. Peter, won't think of any more studying—why should he?

Bezsemenov (*looks dully at PERTSHICHIN and nods his head*). He has means to live on. Money enough. His wife is a nice looking woman. And you are raising a row and making a fool of yourself. Come to your senses.

(*TETEREV laughs aloud*).

Akoolina Ivanovna (*wails*). Everybody has left us . . . deserted

us. . .

Bezsemenov. Keep still mother! They will come back . . they dare not! Where will they go? (*To TETEREV.*) What are you grinning about, you ulcer! Out of my house, not another day, all of you.—

Pertshichin. Wassili Wassilyevich, comrade.

Bezsemenov. Out with you, you miserable tramp.

Akoolina Ivanovna. Tanja Tanetshka! My dear, you poor thing . . what is going to happen now. . .

Bezsemenov. You, my girl, you knew everything and you kept it to yourself. You plotted against your father. (*Suddenly as if terrified.*) You think—he will never leave her! This lewd woman! Will he take her as his wife! My son! Curses on you, miserable abandoned beings!

Tatiana. Oh, let me be! Don't make me hate you.

Akoolina Ivanovna. My poor daughter, my poor unlucky child. They have tortured you to death . . why do they do it?

Bezsemenov. And who did it? Nil, the out-law! He turned our son's head . . has brought bitter sorrow to our daughter. (*Glances at TETEREV, standing at the sideboard.*) You bum, what do you want? Get out of my house!

Pertshichin. Wassili Wassilyevich! What are you putting him out for? Say—the old fellow has gone mad.

Teterev (to BEZSEME NOV). Don't be yelling so, old man, you have not the strength to scatter the forces which have arrayed against you. But do not disturb yourself. Your son will return to you.

Bezsemenov (quickly). How . . how do you know?

Teterev. He will not go far away. . . He has only gone upstairs as it were . . or has been carried up. . . He will soon come down. . . After you die he will rebuild the big pen . . change the furniture about and live as you have lived, quietly, stolidly and comfortably. . .

Pertshichin (to BEZSEME NOV). Now you see, you queer chap! Hothead! People wish you well, have pleasant words for you and you break out bellowing! I tell you, Terentey is a wise chap. . .

Teterev. He will change the furniture about and will go on living in the belief that he has done his duty excellently by life and humanity. And he is exactly like you from top to toe, in all respects, you both—

Pertshichin. As like as two peas. . .

Teterev. Exactly, both cowardly . . both stupid. . .

Pertshichin (to TETEREV). Stop! What are you saying?

Bezsemenov. You may talk if you like, but don't dare any insults. . .

Teterev. When the time comes, just as avaricious, just as self-sure—just as cruel. (*PERTSHICHIN looks wonderingly into TETEREV's face, not understanding whether he is comforting or abusing the old man. BEZSEME NOV's face, too, shows doubt, though intense interest.*) And

just as unfortunate. Life is taking its course, old man, and whoever cannot keep up, is left behind in loneliness.

Pertshichin. There! Ah! Do you hear? Everything happens just as it has got to . . . and you are getting angry?

Bezsemenov. Stop! Let me alone!

Teterev. And your pitiful son will be told the truth then just as unmercifully as I ask you now 'what have you lived for, what good have you done?' And like yourself, your son shall not be able to answer.

Bezsemenov. Yes! . . . what are you talking about now . . . you have a skillful tongue in your head . . . but what about your heart and soul? No, I don't believe you. Let it stand, vacate your room, enough, I have had enough of you. You have preached a harmful gospel here.

Teterev. No! I was not to blame . . . if I only had been. . .

Bezsemenov (*shaking his head*). Shall I endure it?—yes, wait. . . Let us wait. . . I have suffered my whole life long. . . I will go on suffering (*goes to his room*).

Akoolina Ivanovna (*runs after him*). Father! My dear! What have we killed our children for? (*Exit to their room.*) (*PERTSHICHIN stands blankly in the centre. TATIANA, with staring eyes, sits at the piano, looking around. From the old folks' room, a low murmur.*)

Pertshichin. Tanja! . . . Tan . . . (*TATIANA does not answer, nor look at him.*) Tanja! What did they run away crying for? Ha! (*Looks at TATIANA with a sigh.*) Strange people. (*Gazes at the old folks' door and then goes to the hall, shaking his head.*) I will go—to Terentey . . . queer customers!

Tatiana (*slowly bends forward, lets her head sink and supports herself with her elbows on the keys of the piano. The discordant tone fills the room and presently dies away*).

THE ALL EMBRACING

BY INGRAM CROCKETT

[Accorded Honorable Mention in the Prize Competition]

HOW soon the smoke, that dense and black outblows
 From marts of toil, is lost in this charmed air
 Flushed with the crimson of the twilight's rose,
 That softly glows,
 Imperishably fair.

Or Life, or Death, 'tis but the unending change
 By which Immortal Beauty renders pure
 Her infinite dwelling-place, and doth arrange
 Robes rich and strange
 For her investiture.

Even now a star from deeps of blue she brings,
 And hangs it, glowing, on her bosom bright,
 And at her feet a glittering scarf she flings
 Of firefly wings
 And twinkling opal light.

And once I saw her, in the tranced June,
 A rosebud fashioning of heart's desire
 And all the languorous airs that longing swoon
 'Neath Summer's moon:—
 And flames of fragrant fire.

The rainbow is her pathway; when the sky
 Hangs on a breath in silvery lights and gold,—
 And earth's an emerald mist, and Love goes by
 With wistful eye—
 What hope doth she withhold?

All worlds are hers, and from the nebulae,
 Her hands have sown, new worlds in splendor glow—
 Yet round her knees the prattling breezes play,
 And harebells gay
 To her their kisses blow.

Oh, but to follow her forever true!
 Made one with her in every attribute
 Of her nobility—her soul to woo,
 And so renew
 Dreams that elsewhere were mute.

Oh, but to sing of her in some high song
 That would outvoice the glory of her face!
 Some epic strain, that might to her belong,
 Serene and strong,
 And of undying grace.

IN RE CALIBAN

BY OSCAR LOVELL TRIGGS

CALIBAN was the most grotesque and repulsive figure on Shakespeare's stage. At the same time he is one of the most original of the dramatist's creations and was given place in a play which was written in the maturity of Shakespeare's genius. Alonso said at Caliban's appearance: 'This is a strange thing as e'er I looked on.' Prospero called him a 'freckled whelp,' 'hag-born.' It seems that he was fathered by the devil and was reared in solitude. He gabbled until Prospero taught him to speak.

Throughout the play he appears as a wild, brutish creature, devoid of any moral sense. Food alone attracted him. He hearkened to dreams and the music of spirits. When it thundered, he grovelled in fear. His intelligence corresponded to his origin and his necessities. His senses were keenly perceptive and he felt at home with the fresh springs, the berries, the clustering filberts and the blind moles. Within the compass of his nature he was not altogether unpoetical. Although a beast he approximated the attributes of a man.

I suppose that Shakespeare had merely a dramatic interest in this brute-man. The conception of a being of this character would naturally arise with the idea of a desert island. From the play we catch echoes of travelers' tales of the islands of the sea and their savage inhabitants. The facts about primitive races were just then becoming known to the English people. Among contemporary publications were the histories of Sir Walter Raleigh and Richard Hakluyt, Purchas's Pilgrimage and Richard Eden's account of the voyage of Magellan in the South Sea. For the first time, the poet, with his world-wide curiosity, could set forth upon the stage the lowest type of man. For the first time, indeed, he could picture the variety of the human kind; Ariel, belonging to the land of faery, a spirit of the air; Caliban, in far contrast, the basest representative of the earth, a brute emerging from the mud. It was doubtless Shakespeare's purpose to give both types a place and meaning in the play of enchantment. In the case of Caliban he may have meant to entertain his audience with an exhibition of one of Montaigne's 'noble' savages. I would not deny that he had a certain scientific motive in showing the world his idea of an evolutionary growth intermediate between brute and man.

The nineteenth century Caliban is the same picturesque slave of Prospero—and something more. Without losing anything of dramatic

force, Browning delineates the savage subjectively. Sprawling in the cool slush of his cave and surrounded by the abundant life of summer, Caliban looks out over the ocean, where sunbeams cross and recross till they weave a spider's web of fire, and longs for a solution of a mystery, no longer a mere brutish slave of a master, but in a natural and independent way, questioning in regard to the existence and nature of Setebos whom his dam called God. His thoughts are busy with the problem of evil and pain. Setebos rules and vexes man, he thinks, in spite and sport. Above Setebos is the Quiet which the lower god apes and, unable to reach the other's happy life, takes his solace in make-believes. In 'The Tempest' we saw the Caliban form; in Browning's poem we behold the Caliban-soul.

This difference in the two poets' portrayal of the savage nature measures the growth of three centuries. The sixteenth century is termed the period of the Renaissance. It was marked by an efflorescence of the human spirit. Humanity stood a marvel to itself, greater than anyone had dreamed. At the same moment new worlds were disclosed—the ancient world of art and thought, and continents to the West where untold wonders were. The nineteenth century was also an era of expansion, but the new knowledge was spiritual and not physical. Emerson in America and Carlyle in England revealed the invisible world that is in us and about us—as the ancients fabled of the spheral music. Whereas Shakespeare might present life in its outward manifestation, Browning was able to show man thinking, feeling, struggling for spiritual gains; his dramatizations are based upon modern psychology.

In other respects of science Browning represents an immense advance. He had at his service the new science of anthropology, which deals in its history of the human species with the customs and habits and beliefs of primitive man, and the still newer science of folk-lore, which takes for its field of investigation the survivals of primitive modes of life and thought in civilized communities. Caliban, the savage, takes on new meaning. For it is now known that both life and thought are evolutions from lower forms. As life has assumed in series ever higher and higher embodiment, so history, institutions, constitutions, and customs are the result of ideas which have been developing from the beginning of human experience. Life and belief are both vital processes. Development by natural and artificial selection of the fittest organism and the fittest belief is the modern formula of life and opinion. Caliban, in Browning's poem, has formulated a theology which is based, like all his ideas, upon observation of his island home and upon his own nature and experience. He affirms that Setebos is such an one as himself; and as Caliban would act in his own mimic world, so would the god. In the fiftieth psalm of the Psalter the singer proclaims the majesty of his God who said to the wicked: 'Thou thoughtest that I was such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee.' This reproof of 'animism' is heard late

in history. Between the heathen's conception of God created in the image of man and the psalmist's vision of man created in the image of God, lies the long process of civilization, where the mind tended more and more to apprehend the universal element in experience and to give to the highest ideas the authority of a revelation from some unseen deity. From animism the world is by no means free. The modern conceptions that relate to a God that rules the universe, convicts man of sin, judges, is angry, sends retribution, and answers prayer, are as anthropomorphic as those of primitive man. Only the man has grown larger. The religion of science, the sign of which is a sense of awe and wonder in contemplation of the universe as scientifically known, is alone unanthropomorphic. But all initiatory ideas have their origin in experience. The Caliban of the sixteenth century gains infinitely in meaning when his kind is seen to be the progenitor of the human forms amid which he grovels. No one present on that stage—not Prospero or Alonso or Ariel—was aware of that relationship. With what different eyes do we look out upon life, what new interest attaches to every stage of the earth's revolution, now that science has disclosed the chain by which the last is linked to the first and how the lowest moves forward to the highest. And not only man, but every material atom takes on new meaning from the reflux of light. All the prophecies of poets, vaguely hinting in metaphor and symbol of the animism of nature, are fully justified. As Paracelsus taught:

'Man . . imprints forever,
 His presence on all lifeless things; the winds
 Are henceforth voices, wailing or a shout,
 A querulous mutter or a quick gay laugh,
 Never a senseless gust now man is born.
 The herded pines commune and have deep thoughts,
 A secret they assemble to discuss
 When the sun drops behind their trunks which glare
 Like grates of hell; the peerless cup afloat
 Of the lake-lily is an urn, some nymph
 Swims bearing high above her head: no bird
 Whistles unseen, but through the gaps above
 That let light in upon the gloomy woods,
 A shape peeps from the breezy forest-top,
 And with small puckered mouth and mocking eye.
 The morn has enterprise, deep quiet droops
 With evening, triumph takes the sunset hour,
 Voluptuous transport ripens with the corn
 Beneath a warm moon like a happy face.'

The new interest in Caliban as modernly known is, then, two-fold; an interest in his personality, or inner experience, and an interest in the place of that experience in the evolution of man. Browning's poem is illumined fully by the evolutionary idea.

Taking their cue from the words of the Psalter prefixed to the poem, some readers have interpreted Browning's study as a satire upon a low anthropomorphism. If it be a satire then it is a strange instance of irony, for Browning in all his conceptions is as anthropomorphic as Caliban. For him God is Love simply because love exists in the heart of man. God's love is man's love infinitely extended. God is not impersonal, but suprapersonal. What can be more anthropomorphic than the saying of Abt Vogler: 'On the earth the broken arcs; in the Heaven the perfect round'; or the hope of the lover riding his last with his mistress, 'What if we still ride on, we two, with life forever old, yet new, changed not in kind but in degree, the instant made eternity—and Heaven just prove that I and she ride, ride together, forever ride?' Or if these be taken as dramatic utterances, what can be more personal than the poem 'Prospice,' which contains the poet's longing for reunion with the wife that has gone before:

'The elements rage, the fiend voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again?'

Or his last words in 'Epilogue': 'Fight on, fare ever, there as here.'

I understand then that Browning intends in this poem to dramatize a given savage at a certain stage of his evolution, characterizing him in the entirety of his being in emotional, esthetic, moral, and intellectual aspects, emphasizing in especial his religious musings and sentiments for the purpose of exhibiting the origin of some modern derivative phases of the religious life. Looked at from this point of view the poem is a quasi-scientific exposition of the savage nature.

II

Caliban exhibits the characteristics of a primitive man—but how primitive and to what stage of evolution does he belong? It is noticeable that sensations form the chief facts of his experience. He is especially sensitive in the sense of touch, the lowest of the five, as is seen by his love of the cool mud in the warm summer. It is evident that his energy has been directed in physical paths. He is keenly observant, knowing the habits

of animals, the growths of plants, the movements of clouds and the temper of the sea.

Perfected in the lower range of sensory equipment, he is notably defective in respect to self-consciousness. 'The ability of speaking in the first person with the pronoun I signifies,' says Dr. Paul Carus, 'a comparatively mature state of mind.' Caliban discourses of himself in the third person in a childish manner. He becomes aware of his true individuality under two conditions. First, he becomes intoxicated, realizing in this excess of sensation some increase in consciousness, with no more harmful effect than becoming wanton and wishing he were born a bird. Had he increased the measure of his mash and honey-comb and pods he would have risen into that state of ecstasy which accompanies the performance of religious rites among all primitive peoples. Doubtless drunkenness is a survival of this early mode of self-stimulation. The bottle that made Stephano a slave made Caliban a freeman. The personal pronoun is also employed by Caliban when he makes something or compares himself with objects, the act of making and comparing giving him integrity and conscious character.

Another childish trait is disclosed in his imitativeness. He watches Prospero and imitates his master's world with baubles. He makes a book of leaves and writes therein prodigious words and symbols, cuts a branch from a tree for a magic wand, wears a beast's skin for an enchanter's robe, tames an ounce and says she is Miranda, keeps for Ariel a crane, and for a Caliban and slave seizes a sea-beast which he blinds and lames and pens in the rocks to drudge. Such childish conduct indicates his degree of personal evolution.

From the sociological point of view Caliban represents a primitive form of what Professor Lester Ward calls 'pain and pleasure economy.' He does not actively seek pleasure—that is a positive stage belonging to a more highly developed intellect—so much as he strives simply to avoid pain. His comfort assured, he sprawls passively in the slush of the cave. To the end of his physical safety he is cowardly and deceitful. At this moment he is deceiving Prospero, who thinks him at work, and hiding from Setebos, at whom he is laughing in the secrecy of the cave. When the storm rises and the lightning of the god threatens, he is full of fear. He pleads for his life and promises to sacrifice his most valued possessions so he may escape injury. Cowardice and deceit are virtues he has developed in the struggle for existence. Bravery and honesty are vices in the lower ranges of life and speedily bring to death. The swifter the foot, the more cunning the brain, the better fitted is the man or animal to survive. The human intellect in its modes of shrewdness and calculation is of course an evolution of this brute cunning. Bravery and honesty are romantic virtues rarely practiced except when the competitive struggle has grown less and general security and leisure are assured. Doubtless Prospero, the slave's

master, was brave and honest, as were the feudal lords of the Middle Ages when they had time to practice the chivalric virtues. The deceit of nations is known as diplomacy in which the Lie is reckoned with as one of the Powers. But when a nation is strong, it casts diplomacy aside, makes a pretense of bravery and honesty, and trusts to open exploit. Deceit, then, is the necessary resort of weakness and Caliban is pitiably weak when opposed by the magic of Prospero and the sheer might of Setebos. His morality is self-preservative as all early morals must be.

I have called Caliban primitive, but it may now be observed that he is really quite old in racial history. He is old enough to be skeptical on his own part—a kind of liberal theologian, yet not so liberal and advanced as to be free from traditions and associations that belong to racial life. He had been taught of what his dam calls God and of this God she had been taught by her dam and so back for untold generations. Already the general tenets of his theology are formulated by tradition. Caliban is a moon-worshipper, but he did not invent moon-worship. That is one of the racial traditions.

From what is known scientifically of moon-worship, some idea of Caliban's plane of reasoning may be gained. Moon-worship antedated sun-worship. The moon being nearer the earth than the sun, its influence seemed more marked and intimate. It was attended by the hosts of stars, rendering it veritably a Lord of Hosts, while the sun went unattended and unserved. The moon in the mystic night impelled to religious contemplation, while the sun disclosed realities and led men to practical things. Moreover the sun appeared to be the offspring of the god of night and consequently it was held in secondary estimation. It is not unlikely that the Yahweh cult among the ancient Hebrews was in its earliest beginnings identical with the very far spread adoration of the moon-god, who was known under the name of Sin—a title preserved in the name of the Mount Sinai, which was chosen by Moses as a proper place from which to spread the laws of Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts. A Rabinnic legend, indeed, bearing upon the early worship, speaks of the original great splendor of the moon: 'He who at the proper time pronounces the benediction on the new moon is as one who welcomes the very presence of the Shechinah or Divine Glory.' The Jews of the present day, moreover, observe a religious rite which is reminiscent of an earlier mode of worship. At an early date after the appearance of the new moon the Hebrew prayer-book enjoins on the Israelites to assemble for a religious service in the open and the ritual which is observed amounts to a devout and joyous salutation of the new moon.

Caliban's reference to the raven—'There scuds His raven that hath told Him all'—as the spy and private detective of Setebos, points again to his attachment to a wide social group. For there is nothing more extended in primitive life than the fear of the raven, which was somehow a sign of

deity. An associate of deity, though sometimes a ministering angel, the raven became an object of terror and a bird of ill-omen. Among the Scandinavians it was considered as the symbol of death. When Edgar Allan Poe chose the raven to denote a supernatural voice and to arouse the mood of terror, he was practising upon associations, the beginnings of which belong to a period of history antedating Caliban by many generations.

III

As I understand the poem Browning has dramatized a typical savage, primitive enough to be childish in certain traits, and yet not so far removed from adult conditions but that the features of the adult may be traced in the character of the savage. Caliban has all the capacities and attributes of man in some degree of possession. An examination of his nature will reveal the completeness and integrity of his equipment with respect to artistic, moral, and intellectual functioning.

The fullness of his sensory experience has already been commented on. In a few instances these sensations merge into esthetic perceptions—as when he looks out over the sea and observes the sun-beams weaving upon the surface a spider-web of fire, some great fish breaks at times, ruffling the meshes and causing the dusk shadows to play amid the light. He has imagination that moves at large in the vastnesses of space in the home of the Quiet, and that affects in small the symbolic quality of his language. He esteemeth stars the outposts of the Quiet's couch. He figures the wind as shouldering the pillared dust. He says he wove wattles half the winter to fence in tortoises; then a wave of the sea, feeling the foot of Setebos upon its neck, gaped as a snake does, lolled out its large tongue and licked the whole labor flat. If Wordsworth would consent to give up the world so that he might have sight of Proteus rising from the sea, then might this earlier poet perhaps be rendered less forlorn at the loss of his labor by reason of the joy that accompanies imaginative conception. According to his means, again, Caliban is a creative artist. In the few sentences that describe this phase of Caliban's nature, Browning has condensed all that science can tell concerning the origin and character of the artistic impulse. The conditions of esthetic creation are: A general sense of security from want and danger, the possession of super-abundant energy, and leisure for play. Caliban's words are:

‘Tasteth himself no finer good in the world,
When all goes right in this safe summer time,
And he wants little, hungers, aches not much,
Than trying what to do with wit and strength,
Falls to make something.’

That which is produced under such conditions is identical in essential character whether the artist lives in the early or later ages of the world. The work of Caliban is characterized by a sense of order and proportion, color, decoration, and symbolical meanings. He piles turf, proportions the structure, decorates it with squares of soft white chalk, scratching upon them the image of the moon, the home of deity, sets up in the pile some spikes of trees, and crowns the whole with the gleaming white skull of a sloth. 'This is done, he says, solely from the pleasure of the work, the joy of creation.

Not less complete, according to his stage of evolution, is Caliban's moral equipment. His moral motives are both hate and fear—motives which are not so far removed from love and devotion, since neither love nor hate can exist in purity in any personality but must appear in strange confusion. His mother had taught him to love Setebos, but as hate is his chief experience, he can conceive of god only as a god of pain. Nevertheless he has conceptions of right and wrong. He knows he should be at work for Prospero and that it is not right to jibe at Setebos. Fear of punishment recalls him to himself and under conviction of sin he promises reformation. When the storm breaks upon him and the fierce thunder threatens him he seeks to appease the angry god of the skies by promises of loving and fasting and praying. His conduct is determined by fear. Naturally this motive of good conduct is held lightly and is ready to be put off at the least sign of forgetfulness on the part of his master. The slave of Prospero, girt round by hostile forces, he has a bitter heart and bides his time, hoping that the Quiet may conquer Setebos or else the god may sleep. When this enslaved nature comes to birth again, a freeman, long centuries after in Swinburne, and he discovers that his tyrant has in very truth been conquered or gone to sleep, his satisfaction at liberation from the terrors of religion, his exultation at the passing of the gods of pain and fear, his triumphant pæan 'Glory to Man in the Highest' are what we should have expected from a knowledge of the primitive situation. If Setebos did really live and rule, he brought ruin upon himself by his method of mastery and has only himself to blame now that he is banished from the skies. With the attainment of freedom the need of restrictive ethics passes, and Caliban, thus early in history, looks forward to the disruption of every ethical system that is not scientific, that starts from any other than its own ground, that depends upon the restraints of fear or the sanctions of a supernatural religion.

As a religious being Caliban was probably in advance of his kind and leads the revolt against the current orthodoxy in one point of dispute at least—the belief in life after death. His mother held the opinion that Setebos feasted friends and punished enemies in a heaven and hell. But Caliban argues that pain ends with death. This instance is strangely typical.

The debate between the child and the mother, the child that makes advances in new directions, and the mother that holds fast to traditions, is the world-old struggle between religion and science, between the mind that believes and the mind that examines. Caliban is a primitive scientist and bases his thinking on observation and experience. He has conceived already some notion of causation. He distinguishes between the system of things he knows—the sun and moon, meteors, clouds, the winds, the sea and his island home, all elements that seem to come within the circle of a single influence and the stars that belong in their infinite quietude to another rule. Within the sphere of his observation his scrutiny is keen. He knows the habits of animals—how the badger hunts by moonlight, how the pie pricks into oak-warts for worms, how the ants build, how the crabs march from the mountains to the sea, how little birds hate the jay, where tortoises lay their eggs, how urchins curl up into a ball pretending death at his approach, and how grubs grow into butterflies, warts rub away, and sores are cured with slime.

As for his experience on the whole, that is consciousness of pain. His energy is largely expended in avoiding injury and suffering. He hates above all the cold. Since Setebos is evidently ill at ease, the god must live in the moon's cold and make things in spite. Pain, he thinks, can proceed only from pain. Caliban is profoundly pessimistic and as a philosopher he is attached to the cult of pessimism, which is, indeed, the most primitive of all philosophies. His fatalism, however, is modified by a conception of a form of free will. Setebos has made man with limitations enough so that he may enjoy his struggles and mock him in his defeat.

IV

As Browning intended the poem to suggest primarily the origin of various religious beliefs, special attention may be given to this phase of the illustration. The idea of God in most minds is derived from the same source as that of Caliban—namely, from observation and experience. The idea of God, necessarily anthropomorphic, has grown from century to century by extension of observation into every field and the inclusion of experience of every kind. The God of the Christian whose habitation is the sky, to whom he looks when he prays or calls for help, is not far withdrawn from Setebos whose home is in the moon. If a God of Love has been substituted for a God of Hate it is because love has increased in the heart of man. This phase of increase in religious experience is illustrated by Browning in his poem "Saul," where David is enabled to foretell the advent of Christ through his own yearning to help Saul and the development in himself of the life of love.

Like other minds Caliban has worked out an idea of fate. An impersonal deity, called the Quiet, dwells in the background of being, with stars

the outposts of its couch, and controls Setebos as Setebos vexes mortals. The Quiet is underived, self-contained, having neither joy nor grief since these derive from weakness. Doubtless Fate is a primitive form of justice, a correction to the essential weakness of anthropomorphic gods; for gods may commit error, their created worlds may become disordered, and lest their power for evil grow too absolute the human conscience establishes a more absolute Fate—for justice must be done. Cried Ixion, bound to the whirling wheel: 'Out of the wreck I rise—past Zeus to the Potency o'er him.' And when Wotan, the god of the Teutons, permitted the theft of gold from the Rhine maidens and a long series of crimes followed as consequence of the sin, the Germans, by a tremendous act of conscience, condemned their gods to destruction. It is this sense of retributive justice, the feeling that as Setebos vexes mortals with cold and aches so there must be a higher power to make Setebos ill at ease, that characterizes Caliban's notion of Fate. The old idea of punishment, that as a man injures so shall he be injured, is a derivative of this conception of revenge.

Caliban's doctrine of evil is that pain is the sign of an angry god's displeasure and the last pain is death—with which an end of all. His thinking is in harmony with the general propositions of philosophic pessimism. For Setebos there might be substituted the blind capricious World-will of Schopenhauer that in its efforts to come into being afflicts mankind with desires which can never be satisfied, which breed but pain and more desire, the only escape from which is death.

All life, however, is not equally afflicted with pain: 'All need not die, for of the things o' the isle some flee afar, some dive, some run up trees.' Some, that is, are elect and predestined to safety by capricious choice. Caliban reverts here for illustration to his own experience. He has watched a company of crabs crawl from the mountain to the sea. He has let twenty pass and stoned the twenty-first. He twisted the pinchers off the first straggler with purple spots and gave one bruised fellow a worm and two worms to one whose nippers ended in red. Doubtless the crabs were as much disconcerted as mortals are in making their calling and election sure.

Withal Caliban upholds a doctrine of salvation. Death is the final redemption, but within the circle of life there is yet escape from pain. The best way to escape His ire is not to seem too happy. He would cheat the god by seeming to suffer when in the best of health. So he dances on dark nights, moans in the sun, gets under cover to laugh. So the world at large fears the disaster that treads on the heels of good-fortune; so the happy man sobers his exultation lest the next moment he suffer grief; so Italian peasants cross themselves if their work be praised too highly. When Caliban can not deceive Setebos he will appease him by sacrifice. He will either punish himself by cutting off a finger, or biting through his upper

lip, or denying himself the toothsome apples, quails or whelks, or secure his safety by blood atonement—as by sacrificing his finest kid yearling and burning it upon an altar with appropriate rites.

It remains to be noted that Caliban in all these respects exhibits the thought and conduct of a slave. Godhood is mastery. The slave cowers before the tyrant. He is moved to service by fear. To his master certain obligations are due—obligations of reverence, devotion, obedience and prayer. His own ends are accomplished by deception or renunciation. Could we now have the thoughts of Prospero, we should at once detect the difference between the slave-morality of the one and the master-morality of the other—to adopt the designation of Nietzsche. The one is held under obligations of obedience, the other under those of personal honor and self-culture. From the slave have sprung all those ethical systems that advocate ascetic ideals—poverty, humility and chastity—that insist upon unselfishness, duty, renunciation and sacrifice, and that promise salvation and general compensation in another world of rest and glory. From the master has proceeded worldliness and the ethics that assert egotism and self-realization. The master, from the motive of self-protection, has taught altruism to his servants, but he has practised egotism. The slave has accepted the principle of sacrifice and, as if in revenge, has imposed it upon the world as the ground of good conduct. Today the two principles meet in curious confusion. Caliban, the slave, has disappeared, and the place and dignity of Prospero have been promised to all. But the slave-morality remains. It remains however, only as a survival from past ages, and can not long endure against the opposing ethics of democracy. Restrictive ethics—the ethics of underlings—is passing out of the books and is generally disavowed in practice. Life is being understood as self-expression and interpreted in terms of mastery. Life is becoming dynamic, creative, strong. When the influence of Caliban is utterly outlived, when both Caliban and Prospero have disappeared into the limbo of forgotten things, then the democratic world will join with great relief in chanting Swinburne's pæan, 'Glory to Man.'

A GROUP OF POEMS

BY LECONTE DE LISLE

Translated from the French by C. L. Crittenton

I. MOONLIGHT

THE sea is grey, calm, immense,
Vainly the eye seeks—
Nothing finishes, nothing commences—
It is neither night, nor day.

Not even a fringe of foam,
Not even a star on high:
Nothing is extinguished, nothing kindled;
In space is neither darkness nor light.

The albatross and petrel with harsh cries,
The porpoise, blowers, all have gone:
Over this still solitude
Hovers a vague and deep melancholy.

No sound, not even a breath:
A heavy ship's hull rolls slowly
Outside of the water, showing dully
The copper of its polished flanks.

And all along the deck benches
The watchmen, without seeing,
Look out, dreaming—the billows
Rise and fall, ceaselessly moving.

Then toward the East, a white glimmer,
Like a cinder lightly blown,
Spreads out in a slender sheet
Emerging as from the horizon.

It swims, pours out, disperses itself,
Stretches to every part,
Upwhirls, falls back, and sheds
Its transparent and soft haze.

A pale fire shines; and breaks upon
 The trembling sea, which opens a moment,
 And—in the pearl-colored sky—
 The moon mounts slowly.

II. THE FALL OF THE STARS

FALL, O beloved pearls,
 Pale stars, into the sea.
 A mist of rose clouds
 Emerges from the clear horizon;
 In the East, full of sparks
 The joyous breeze beats its wings
 A border of surge gives a lightning flash.
 Fall, O immortal pearls,
 Pale stars, into the sea.

Plunge under the fresh foam
 Of the mysterious ocean.
 The light riddled as with arrows
 Makes the hills radiant;
 Thousands of mingled cries,
 Come from the dewy woods:
 A music mounting to heaven.
 Plunge, with tears,
 Into the mysterious ocean.

Escape, sad planets.
 O Paradise, far-distant as yet!
 The dawn with metallic lips
 Smiles in the sky and takes life;
 Clothing itself in soft flames,
 On the emerald of the waves
 Sparkling like drops of gold.
 Escape, worlds where souls live,
 O Paradise, far-distant as yet!

Go, stars, of the soft nights,
 Of the mute skies of the West.
 On the foliage and the moss
 The sun darts an ardent eye;
 The stags bounding in the valleys,

Bathe themselves in the turbid springs,
The sounds of man begin to rumble.
Go, O white exiles,
To the mute skies of the West.

Happy those who follow you, 'dull lights,
O lamps which shed forgetfulness!
Like you, in boundless shadow
Happy they who rest entombed!
They go toward peace:
Hate, love, tears, violence,
That which is of man is abolished.
Give us eternal silence
O lamps which shed forgetfulness.

III. BIRDS OF PREY

I WAS seated on the ancient heights
In the virgin snow, before the Gods;
I saw mounting in the calm air
A procession of the glorious dead.
The earth breathed a divine hymn
Not heard since a forgotten century,
And the golden chain of Homeric Zeus
From link to link joined it up to Heaven.
But, O passions, black birds of prey!
You have troubled my dreams and my joy;
I fall from Heaven, yet not to die!
Into my living flesh, your sharp nails
Have thrust anguish with desire,
And you have said: 'Thou must live.'

PLATO AS A LITERARY SCHOOL FOR WRITERS

BY JANET PAYNE BOWLES

The literary artist has been variously formed and nurtured, sometimes consciously from the beginning, as Stevenson and de Maupassant, or unconsciously by tumultuous living, as Tolstoi, or indifferently by the pressure of business perhaps, as we suspect of the Shakspeare, careless of his manuscript; or by personal, friendly persuasion, as with George Eliot, or by dogmatic bitterness of opposition, as the case of Turgenev, who might have been idly content, forever, in his own images, had not friends been brutal in their criticism; but probably there is no other literary case of a man's becoming a supreme artist in spite of his deliberate refusal to be one, except that of Plato.

This great achievement of an artistic man, disdainful of art, makes one wonder what are the forces or the point of view that make an effort so valid without the rudder of ambition. As an exemplar of the purest dignity of the art, without the foreignness or miscarriage of ambition, we may look to Plato for the real bearing of literary meaning.

Whatever may be the quality or the motives of our great men in literature, (great men are depths not easily read, and results not necessary to analyze), the average body of writers betrays its motive to be arbitrary ambition or aesthetic ignorance, or love of a gentle and comfortable occupation, or a polite, but shallow egotism. These motives, to be sure, are not confessed even to self analysis, but motives are so bound in with the woof of result and tendency, that they may be discovered circumstantially for the purpose of artistic justice; and it is only by penetrating the psychological depths, as pedagogy proceeds, that criticism may hope to benefit; by speaking plainly of every suspicion, that true respect is rendered; and of advising to a master, the most comprehensive of all, the one whose teaching and process would harm nor distract no temperament, that originality is valued.

Writers, no doubt, think always they are adapted to the work they pursue, that if they prefer that work they are entitled to earn their livelihood there, and if they most desire fame for literary excellence, it defines an honorable ambition and a specific right. There is no doubt that a person must do what he does best, and likes most, and it frequently falls out that one's best is endeavor toward literature, yet when done, it makes but an average or current contribution to literature. So that the problem must be met

from two sides,—personal justice and the right of criticism to protect great subjects. To demand of every writer a tangible equipment, and a great point of view, is only justice then to the community; and for criticism to give a place and honoring kindness to the average talent is civic paternity in its beauty.

Since the average writer is so used and needed by our nervous civilization, it is not a cheapness of ideal to consider him as always remaining average, because the standard of average is continually to be made greater, until in time of advanced training to be a least writer is to have the dignity of old Athenian citizenship. But while we will allow our writers to be no better than medium, and still call them artists, it is only because as psychologists, we know the personal effort is the man, not the apparent result. When a man elects himself to be an artist, to all purposes of psychology he is one, his effort will have its effect upon the community's literature for good or bad, and the only way to keep the stream of art pure is to inspire great literary motive, yet to maintain average production as one legitimate form of art. But the equipment and the great point of view—which are as much technical requirements to the writer, as the science to the engineer—and yet which mean only education and breadth of vision, which should be the ultimate aim of every man and woman in the world—these are the touchstones of his availability. They come from well ordered schooling, an open nature, and a fair chance of mingling with life. They come stealthily, like physical growth, and are used unconsciously, like our vitality. But notwithstanding this, there is no more natural and effective way of acquiring a definite thing, than to sit under a master. Plato seems to be this master mind, not for any special mention of the literary art, but because he directs all talent and thought with a peculiar applicability that seems as occult as the all-sided meaning of the oracle. Because he is universal, he takes the mind of striving desire, but no grasp of matter or life, (such minds as crowd the lists of fervid, incompetent aspirants) and gives it a scope of travel through the essential beauties of soul space, and the wonders of daily conduct, and the miraculous immutabilities of spirit that forever tinges its output with more than a knowledge of the manners of men, with a belief and knowledge of their practical divinity. This celestial, psychological, and political way Plato has of considering mankind in its fact and its ideality, uniting it with a God, a State, fellow man, and its self-knowledge, all the while keeping the atmosphere of its daily tools, is a totality that a writer who has acquired, need never fear his ability of picturing the outward show of life truly, if he truly have any narrating gift at all. He will have learned to see so much, the difficulty will be to picture so passing little. Plato is so practical that a one-sided realist would be ashamed of having left out the spiritual overtones of common

affairs, and a mawkish sentimentalist would be surprised to learn that the overtones he heard in the world came from an Absolute that could be proved by the commonest analogy of ordinary affairs.

Plato is good, most good for the original talent, for, as Emerson says, 'he plays havoc with our originality.' And nothing is so good for the one who feels his thought and temperament to be original, as to know by heart the great sources of thought, that he may farther his ideas by their proper genealogy. Plato is good for the one who finds it hard to think but as other men think, for he learns the value and trend of traditional thought, and may become original by thinking with the creator of most ideas, instead of with an inaccurate tradition, corrupted from its pure relation to deeds.

The other universal man, Shakspeare, might be cited just as well as a master for all these things, except that with him, the poet, the influence is more purely subjective; it does not incite to a definite status of belief so much as it produces great emotion. As Emerson again says, 'He does not preach.' In Plato's own theory, Shakspeare, as the producer of most beautiful images and precepts, and the most knowing of artists, would be recommended as this brooding influence to the young. 'He must seek for such workmen as are able by the aid of a good natural genius, to investigate the nature of the beautiful and the graceful, that our youth, dwelling as it were in a healthful place, may be profited on all sides; whence from the beautiful works, something will be conveyed to the sight and hearing as by a breeze bringing health from salutary lands; imperceptibly leading them on to the resemblance, friendship, and harmony with right reason—moreover, the man who has been thus educated [by the symbols of art] perceives in the quickest manner whatever workmanship is defective, and whatever execution is bad, or whatever productions are of that kind; and being rightly disgusted, he will praise what is beautiful, rejoicing in it and receiving it into his soul, be nourished by it, and become a worthy and a good man.'

But, still, according to Plato's theory, the all-embracing master he would put directly over any pupil would be such an accomplished, many-sided one as himself—the 'guardian'—one who is the philosopher, the teacher, the artist—the one who attains his wisdom by having gone the same path under perfect guidance. So Plato not only gives the inspiration to one's craft spirit of a great beatific style, a use of words which is a system of logic in itself, a superb embodiment of the manners of his time, without any strain of artistry, but he alone gives this with a definite philosophy of how to live to produce work, and form being, and know men, and to be a writer, or any other kind of an artisan or man. While he is the greatest abstracter the world has ever known, etherealizing every concrete image to its absolute, the good—still, no one man has ever touched

every general trade's qualities and talents with such a vivid and incisive and universal criticism as to be a manual for any worker—with such intimate pleas for the justice of every profession and trade as to be affectionate council for any man ill sorted to his task.

Yet with all this philosophy and didactic training is the rhythmic sense of poetry—poetry of words, of arguments, of morals, of religion, of life.—‘Most of the arguments of Plato might have been couched in sonnets,’ says Emerson. No other writer has ever so fastened language upon didactic thought that it soars like an eagle into the spiritual regions of poetry. And Plato's personality does not mystify us through this great genius of thought in words. He gives the receipt, so to speak, of how to become an artist in eloquence, and herein lies his particular value as a teacher of art, that while explaining its innermost meaning so that no one who reads could ever be small in it again, he reveals his own soul's composition and experience in life as an example to the point. ‘So it does not appear,’ as Plato says in the symbol of his Attic simplicity, ‘that the youth of our times are trained as they should be in music,’ and by music he means the harmony of all expression in words with the great principles of truth and beauty. And then he goes on to say that which has more technical significance still for the equipment of the writer: ‘Do not the manner of expression and the words correspond with the character of the soul? And all other things correspond to the expression? So that the beauty of expression, fine consonancy, and propriety, and excellence of numbers, depend on a good disposition—not that stupidity which in complaisant language is called good nature, but the moral character truly adorned with excellent and beautiful manners. Must not these things be always pursued by the youth, if they are to perform their work?’

Because the voice of Socrates persuaded Plato to the belief in the primal essence of all things first, he became a philosopher instead of an avowed artist in words. Thus his ambition was diverted by the infection of a great idea, from producing artistic form to the cultivation of his real being. He desired just to *be* great. He wrote greatly because the craft of writing was his talent, and after becoming infused with this universal thought, and getting his poise between what he owed the world and what he desired to do, he heaved forth art calmly, but irresistibly. Loving art first of all he purified himself for his art, desiring art most of all, he achieved greater things than art, first, that art would not be a thing apart from life and universal meanings. Contrast this mighty innocence with the rush for reputation of our young writers, contrast this preparation for life work with the swift recourse to letters of our youth who know scarcely anything of life; contrast the tocsin call to immense citizenship of Plato, the artist, with the excuse of some of our writers that they avoid politics because it is impure. Read the encounters of high minded,

life-loving Plato, sitting on the Pireus, in the market place, in the street, fronting life, stylus in hand, from morning until night among men, wafting them into art, as the breeze blowing odor up from the sea. We know only Walt Whitman among us who has worked thus, construing art in the face of construing life. Contrast the art of local color of our modern writing with those touches of Athenian life in Plato, so embodied with the spiritual arguments that we can't think of the discourse on Justice without a picture of Socrates being dragged from the festival to the Goddess, to the house of the veteran Cephelus for discourse with his friends. And how we feel the pictured life of Cephelus in that mere skillful deference of Socrates to his old age. The picture of garrulous Xantippe snuffling in the prison is implied narrative of Socrates' whole domestic life. Yet how consummately, by the exclusive power of receiving only essentials, is the incident made only a phrase, so to speak, in the proving of souls to be joyously immortal.

So in choosing to be moved by a higher impetus than personal ambition, in forestalling the technical labor of life, with an immense preparation for the spiritualities of death, thus first paying his dues to his gods, and in acquiring the sense of citizenship, thus paying his dues to the state, Plato made himself justly ready to indulge his private talent. And then, when he was relieved by delivery of his art, he still said, call me not an artist but a philosopher, because the good is greater than the beautiful, it includes the beautiful, and I still desire the innermost. Thus art, even to an artist, is only the uncheckable incident of a man's labor, not such a concern as his life, or his soul, or his civic duty.

This point of view peculiarly fits the case of writers, because their art being not at all imitative, as the plastic and physical arts (as we use the word, not as Plato uses it, for with him everything is imitative which comes after the conception)—but altogether creative; their work calls upon every faculty, idea and point of view, and ability to live, that a man has. What a writer does is never separate from his work, since the sensory of his art is all his combined senses, including the occult. If he pervert any sense, his art has narrowed its range from true vision of life, and whatever perverted form of life he may character, he must be felt to rise like an all knowing providence above his work.

All character in literature is perceived in contrast to two patterns, the ideal man, and man as he happens in life. Both these patterns must stand perceptibly, though invisibly, beside every literary creation if it is complete, and the ability argues more study than observation of obvious life. This every genius conforms to, and so must the average writer—thus at least he performs his civic duty to art, and like Plato's, his art will take care of itself, to render him great, it may be, or at least wholesome and helpful to men.

No one needs citizenship like the writer, whose materials are the manners and heart of man. He takes his light from the institution of the state and society, and if he is at war with them his service may turn out to be freakish, like Nietzsche's, or he will be so violent a reformer as to displace him from art altogether, as Mazzini's, who also hugged literature in his leisure; or, if disagreeing with laws as they are, he be not enthusiastic for pure justice, he will form an acrid but pointless wit, like some of the degenerate French fictionists, who think they hold the mirror up to nature by showing only vulgarity.

It is to be remembered, always there is this universal perception of the soul walking through every book, if it lives. It may be in the average work which fails of workmanship, like Olive Schreiner's 'African Farm,' nevertheless a writer with such a motive has contributed to the permanence of art feeling, by some psychic way, even if art is missed.

The graphic and realistic narrator, by this Platonic, universal conception of the soul, deepens his art to a greater type than by pursuing the superficial sight alone. And it may be done without offending the rule that art should be mere representation. Art represents, but what? Not necessarily only the surface of things, the manners and conduct of folk, local atmosphere, to be even realistic, for representation is *all* that the eye sees, perhaps at a quick glance sometimes for some kinds of art, but then the power of the eye is unlimited and undeveloped, and differs according to the status of the soul. And it is the business of the artist not to hold superficiais forever as they are, and keep graphic art tied to tradition, but to expand their senses and souls to receive deeper sight in their quick glances. This is the beauty of Plato's eternal advice to keep to the unalterable—that man constantly augments, yet his art attains infinite variety of phase, in pursuing the monotonous elusive eternal. So a public for a moment defines the style of externals as the popular, easy, natural, right form of art, but no such mere graphic art lives among remaining classics. Should not even the average writer work by Herbert Spencer's great maxim, 'victory less, truth more'? Because he is only for current use is no reason why he should deal in untruthful phase. Because art is supposed to be only the record of appearances is no reason why the artist with a soul, should know only appearances. Current literature is of greater consequence to us than classical thought because by copying ourselves in books we take again our example from ourselves, and unless the pattern is incorporate with the great, permanent freshening ideals, we deplete our race standard, as by family intermarriage.

This ideality and permanence in classics is called the knowing of 'human nature,' a term which defines but a part of the essence which is really meant. However, we know that genius always has the quality, being born all-seeing, and genius will take care of literature. But genius does not

affect the moral tone of his times as does the average writer, who is read more widely and by those most needing influence. He does not even affect his smaller fellows much, except in way of imitation.

So the average writer must be *trained* to his universality for the sake of his artistic soul and his mission. Plato can give the afflatus. If the divine ghost of his own idea, the 'guardian,' should work in our writers, general life would throb with a new spirit, as politics would if his philosopher were at the head of government. The intention of the ordinary writer would be suffused with that artistic fervor, that cosmical reminiscence, that leaven of life that Plato's art makes us feel is in the ordinary, bereaved, but enthusiastic friends of dead Socrates, 'We shall act as you desire, Socrates.'

And by this temperamental sign would we know that literature and the life it invokes are to improve.

THE WANDERER

(Translated from the original Anglo-Saxon)

BY CLARENCE J. BULLEIT

(The Wanderer is representative of the lyrics produced in the first period of Anglo-Saxon literature. The dominant note is that of sadness. The poet is full of the sorrows of bereavement and of exile; he laments the death of protectors and of friends, the passing away of the joys of comradeship; his delusive dreams of past happiness deepen by contrast the gloom of the desolate reality wrought by death, change and devastation. But although a man cannot withstand fate, he can in distress practice the restraint and resignation of the true hero.—Bright.)

Often the recluse prayeth for mercy,
for the favor of God though sad of heart
over the ocean long must he stir
with weary hands the rime-cold sea,
go the path of the exile: Fate is inexorable!
Thus spake the wanderer mindful of hardships
of the fury of battle, of the death of friends:
'Oft have I had to bewail my griefs
alone at the dawn; not one now is living
to whom I my bosom dare open and show
the whole of my sorrow. In sooth do I know

there is in the hero a habit most noble,
that he his heart fast bindeth within him,
his heart's secrets holds whate'er be his thoughts;
for the spirit dejected cannot withstand Fate,
nor more the fierce soul give aid to the needy.
Therefore the fame-seekers must dreary oft
in the breast-chamber their sorrows fast bind.
So I my heart oft when wretched,
deprived of home, from kinsmen far,
have had to bind securely in fetters,
since that sad day when the darkness of earth
enwrapped my lord, and I dejected
and full of the cares of many years
sadly passed over the mingling waves,
dreary halls sought, dispensers of treasures,
where I near or far perchance should find
who in the meed-hall might favor show
to a friendless exile, console him with pleasures
and the feasts of the hall. He who has felt them
knows how perilous be griefs for companions
to him who hath few of beloved protectors:
exile attends him, not wrought-out gold,
coldness of hearts, not the riches of earth;
he remembers his comrades, the receivings of gifts,
recalls how in youth the giver of treasures,
his lord, has him feasted: those joys all have failed!
Therefore doth he know a bitter void,
he who hath lost the precepts beloved
of his friendly lord, when sorrow and sleep
the wretched wanderer oftentimes bind.
He imagines in dreams that he his liege lord
embraces and kisses, and on his knee lays
his hands and his head, as he often before
in the days gone by these favors enjoyed;
then wakes he again, the friendless man,
and sees before him the dusky waves,
the sea-birds bathing, spreading their feathers,
frost and snow falling mingled with hail.
Then are most painful the wounds of his heart,
sore for the loved one; grief is renewed;
then dreams of his kinsmen flit through his brain,
he sees with delight, and eagerly greets
his comrades of old; but they swim away,

these phantoms of air, nor speak to his ear
 familiar words; care is renewed
 for him that must send often and often
 over the ocean his spirit dejected.
 Therefore can I not for the world conceive
 why my mind is not shrouded in desolate night,
 when I on the lives of the heroes reflect,
 how these noble retainers the floor of the hall
 oft sudden desert. So perish and fall,
 day by day, the things of the world;
 therefore may no man wisdom attain
 until he has passed many long years
 in the kingdom of earth. The wise should be patient,
 should not be too passionate, should not be too hasty,
 should not be too weak, should not be too heedless,
 too fearful, too gladsome, nor too avaricious,
 nor desirous of boasting, ere they well understand.
 Man ought to await ere he boastfully speaks,
 until he, proud-minded, knoweth full well
 whither will turn his purpose of heart.
 The wise man perceives how terrible it is,
 when the rich things of earth all stand waste,
 as even now stand various walls,
 remnants of palaces, throughout the world,
 blown by the winds, covered with frost;
 the wine-halls have crumbled, the lords lie still
 deprived of all joys; the proud host have fallen
 beside the lone walls: some, war hath destroyed,
 hath carried away; one, the foamy-prowed vessel
 bore over the sea; one, the gray wolf
 rended to pieces; another, the lord
 with sorrowful face hid in the grave:
 so the Ruler of men the earth layeth waste,
 till the works of old giants desolate stand,
 free from all sounds, from the noise of the burgers.
 He then this ruined wall and this dark life,
 with wise understanding, reflects upon deeply;
 subtle of mind, far back he remembers
 the greatness of slaughter, and these words speaks:
 'Where are the war-horse and rider? Where is the giver of treasure?
 Where is the seat of the banquet? Where are the joys of the hall?
 Alas the bright cup! Alas the mailed warriors!
 The glory of princes! How time has departed

under the night-helm, as if it were not!
 Where once stood the loved ones, now standeth the wall
 wondrously decked with the works of the worm!
 The might of the spear, greedy for slaughter,
 hath laid the lord low, a glorious fate!
 And the wild storms beat the stony cliffs,
 and the falling snow and the terrors of winter
 bind fast the earth; then comes the darkness,
 the night-shades fall, and from the north hurries
 the fierce tourney of hail with destruction to man.
 The kingdoms of earth are all full of hardships,
 the decree of Fate changes the world under heaven:
 here riches are fleeting, here friendships are fleeting,
 here man is fleeting, here kindred is fleeting;
 the things of the world all become desolate.'"
 So spake the wise man in his soul, as he meditated apart.
 He is blessed that holdeth his faith, nor should ever the hero reveal
 too fully the rage of his breast, unless he can cope with his passion,
 as ever with zeal did the earl. Well is it for him that seeks mercy
 and solace of the Heavenly Father, where safety for all of us resteth.

THE MOTHERLESS HEROINE

BY LOUISE MAUNSELL FIELD

THE Lords of Fiction have promulgated many laws for the good government of their realm; some of them have been proclaimed with drums and trumpets, many only tacitly; nearly every one has been bent or broken by some writer, great or small; but there is one supreme law with which no maker of fiction has ever ventured to tamper. That universally obeyed law is this: no heroine can have a good mother. She may have brothers and sisters who are models of fraternal perfection; a father who is everything that a father should be; but a mother, in the true sense of the word, she can not have. She may be young or old, rich or poor, beautiful or ugly, clever or foolish, well-bred or unspeakably rude; but she must be practically motherless.

The reason why all writers, good or bad, bow to this law, is not far to seek; for how could a heroine walk blindly into the pitfalls, make the mistakes, or, indeed, do any of the more or less foolish things that are

needed to carry the story through the requisite number of pages, if she were watched over and guarded by a wise, tender, far-sighted mother? Semi-occasionally a hero may, like Mr. Hichens' Felix or Lucas Malet's Sir Richard Calmady, be allowed to have a real mother, and by sending him away from her the author can still manage to get into trouble enough to make things interesting; but a heroine!—never.

Since the days of Shakespeare, writers have had to make their choice between three ways of disposing of the mother difficulty. The majority prefer to follow the example of the immortal William and kill off the heroine's mother before the story begins; of all Shakespeare heroines Juliet and Perdita are the only ones who are not at least half orphans—and Perdita's mother hardly counts, as she never even sees her until the very end of the play, when all her troubles are over. This "deadly" method has the great merit of enabling the author to bestow all sorts of virtues on the defunct mother, thus making it possible to paint the heroine's father as a consummate villain and yet obey all the requirements of the most modern laws of heredity. The many other excellences of this way of solving the problem have been attested by all sorts and descriptions of writers, from Fanny Burney to Stanley Weyman.

Another way is to make the heroine's mother weak and foolish, as Jane Austen did with Mrs. Bennet, whose daughter Elizabeth, one of the most adorable heroines in fiction, gets all her cleverness from her father. George Eliot used this method with great success in 'Daniel Deronda'—which, by the way, is an excellent example of the impossibility of giving a heroine a really good mother; for who can doubt that if Mrs. Davilow had not been a tender, timid mother, compunctious at having subjected her daughter to inconveniences, Gwendolen would have had very different ideas in regard to matrimony and so have been saved from wrecking her life as she did? Another shining example of the success of the 'weak mother' method is Beatrix Esmond, who might have become a noble woman had she been under other guidance than that of weak, jealous Lady Castlewood.

The third method, and the one least used, is to give the heroine a bad heartless mother. Mrs. Ward has adopted this method a couple of times, notably in 'The Marriage of William Ashe' where Lady Kitty's many—let us be gentle and call them by a mild term—vagaries, are excused on the ground of Madame d'Estrées's general depravity.

Though each of these three solutions of the mother problem has its own individual excellences and advantages the last two really cannot compare at all with the first. For instance: Anne Elliot was greatly like her charming mother, who certainly would not have permitted her daughter to be 'persuaded' to give up Wentworth—had not Miss Austen 'killed her off' before Anne was fourteen. Emma would never have indulged in the

match-making schemes that got her into so much trouble if her mother had not died shortly after her birth. Evelina's mama seems to have been as foolish as her daughter, but had she lived she might perhaps have learned a little wisdom from experience and kept Evelina from being quite such a consummate little goose, while Desdemona's mother would surely have noticed the great interest her child took in the Moor's tales and promptly despatched her on a visit to Kinsfolk in Genoa or elsewhere. A mere dream about her mother decided Jane Eyre's conduct in the great crisis of her life.

What would have become of 'The Pirate' 'Rob Roy' 'Waverly' or 'Ivanhoe' if Minna Troil, Di Vernon, Flora MacIvor and Rebecca of York had not all lost their mothers before the books began? Though George Eliot used two ways of disposing of the mother difficulty, she wisely gave early death the preference. Romola, Hetty Sorel, Dinah, Esther and Dorothea, are all at least half orphans. And how could Anthony Hope's adorable Peggy have 'intruded' as she did, casually dropping in on her men friends at all hours of the day and night, if she had had a wise and cautious mother?

No greater compliment could possibly be paid to women than this general acknowledgment of the infinite power for good wielded by a wise, loving mother; this universal recognition by all English-speaking writers, from the earliest down to those of the present day, of the fact that if in spite of this tender care a girl makes great mistakes or does very wrong things she must be either an idiot, or else inherently so depraved as to be unfit for anything save the pathological ward of a hospital, while to deprive her of such guidance is to give her an excuse for follies and transgressions that goes straight to every heart. For callous indeed must be the person in whom no pity is awakened by the plea so exquisitely voiced by Robert Browning:

'I was so young, I loved him so, I had no mother, God forgot me, and I fell.'

TWO SONNETS

BY ANNE CLEVELAND CHENEY

CLASPED HANDS*

HUSH! let us dream awhile now, leaning near
This wonder of two hands laid each in each,
Enduringly, beyond mutation's reach,
As king and queen lie carven on one bier.
Thou fragile hand, thou strong — each deathless dear,
E'en all those living songs, that quickening speech,
Have not more potency to thrill and teach,
Than this ineffably sweet emblem here.

So clasped forever, that the world may know
Such union was, may nevermore forget;
And lovers come as to a shrine and sigh,
'So did their faith endure!' and softer go;
And poets kneel before these two palms met,
To shrive themselves and pass more purely by.

MY DREAM

(Of 'E. B. B.')

METHOUGHT that from its anguished frame my sprite
Fled, shuddering, and hasted far and fleet,
Until drawn earthward by an odor sweet —
Supernal, of great lilies Christly white,
In trance of memory it stayed its flight,
Before a well-loved portal, in that street
Made holy by the passing of her feet,
Since roaming meads of asphodel and light.

And straight my spirit entered — saw her plain,
Upon her couch, among the shadows there,
And darkling tapestries, 'gainst which outshone
Dead Keats's brow; then like some heavenly strain,
Her gaze thrilled through me as she grew aware —
Ah, God! of me, my soul, with hers alone.

** Miss Hosmer's bronze cast of the two Browning hands, in the collection of the Boston Browning Society, Boston Public Library.*

SOUTHERN VERSE

BY TOM SIGISMUND STRIBLING

HISTORY is the mould of literature. This whim, that impulse, this passion, every thing that, in its turn, has moved a people to thought or to action, will be faithfully reproduced, line for line, curve for curve, niche for niche, in the literature of that people.

This is almost literally true of an homogeneous people; a people into whose common body of thought and sentiment there flows no tide of immigration, bearing in its current new ideas, new interests, new desires, which would serve to blur and eradicate the old traditions and the old ideals. We say the literature of such a people, compact in race and thought, would reflect more clearly than any other its country's history and its local customs, because that history and those local customs would be clean, decided, clear-cut, and would thus exert a definite force, instead of a force diffused through many channels.

And this would be doubly, trebly true when that homogeneous race happened to be an emotional, passionate people. The reason is not far to seek. A people's literature is largely a matter of emotion; to remove this factor would cause literature to become dry, didactic, inclined to run into statistics. It being such a matter of emotion, a passionate, emotional people would, naturally, have a greater supply of the material of literature than a colder folk. Again, any emotion in such a people would be more clearly defined, more easily traceable, than in a colder folk. Their writers, too, would most likely be more sympathetic, more delicate colorists of their country's thoughts and feelings than the writers of a colder folk.

In other words, we believe, that in any homogeneous, passionate people there is a fitting soil for the cultivation of a fine, delicate, and distinctive literature; a literature set apart from all other literatures, a literature that will smack of the very life of the people, that will interpret them truly, that will set forth their truest and most earnest thought,—all of which, in our opinion, is necessary to make up what one might call, in truth, a national literature.

The history of mankind affords numerous and striking examples of the truth of this proposition. Every great literature is a type, every people a proof. Egypt, brooding over the eternal mysteries of the Nile, cold and repellent to all outsiders, wrapped in self, swayed by a strong national spirit, became the home of letters, produced the weird legends of Isis and Osiris.

wrought out one of the noblest, one of the most majestic, one of the most distinctive types of architecture ever known to the world.

The Hebrews were a peculiarly exclusive people; a people whose very laws forbade marriage, or any intimate social intercourse with other nations. The Hebrews possessed a strong national spirit, which welded the people into such vital and intimate relations that they were more like a great family than a nation. Hebrew writers continually express this unity of sentiment by such sentences as these: "Now Israel went out against the Philistines." "For this was a statute for Israel." "The Lord hath avouched thee to be his peculiar people," and the common phrase, "The children of Israel." Again, any one familiar with the history of the Jews knows them to be an impulsive, passionate people. Thus in the Jews, we have the two characteristics, unity and passion, which we set out above to be the proper soil to produce a fine, distinctive, national literature. Every one acquainted with Jewish writings knows how abundantly they fulfil these expectations. There was never a nation between dawn and sunset that has produced so beautiful, so majestic, and so distinctive a literature. It is so thoroughly Jewish, so thoroughly impregnated with the Hebrew spirit, that none but a Jew, amid Jewish surroundings, could hope to produce the like. Ages ago, the Hebrews were dispersed, Jerusalem, the golden, was humbled unto dust, her mighty men of valor now sleep within the eternal silence of her tombs. But above this scene of desolation we hear the songs of other days, David and Isaiah chanting the ancient glories of their race, Jeremiah wailing beside the alien waters of Babel, and Ezekiel vaguely longing for the coming of his Lord. Israel perished, but it has left to the world a sacred heritage, worthy of that mighty race, a majestic national literature, inimitable and incomparable.

Now let us consider Southern verse. The South, that is, the Southern and erstwhile slave-holding states of our Union, has had a peculiar history. The influences governing, and the circumstances surrounding her growth as a people have been powerful to draw Southern men into close relationship and strong sympathy with each other. In truth, this patriotic feeling of Southern men for their loved Dixie took precedence over any other allegiance they might owe. Men of the North, not understanding the influences at work in the South, wondered at Southern political men in Washington, at Southern officers in the United States army, who were opposed to secession personally, yet who, when the rupture with the North finally came, dropped all allegiance to the Union, frankly and unhesitatingly, as though there were never a question in their minds as to whom they owed their services and their lives.

The North did not understand such action, because the North did not, and could not, understand the vital oneness of sentiment among Southrons; nor did it appreciate the complex causes at work in the South,

which must have inevitably led to such a sentiment. This sentiment and relation is expressed in the political world of today by the phrase, "Solid South."

As we have said, the causes of this single-hearted spirit in the South were various and complex. There is within the South, an element, which was once the source of her pristine glory and strength, and once the source of her lamentable fall. This element worked in multitudinous ways to foster and preserve this unity of sentiment so puzzling to foreigners.

Just as the negro, in those post bellum days, drew the South together in solid phalanx politically, so also, did the negro serve to keep intact an almost idyllic social structure. This came about in two ways. All manual work was done by slaves, and this left room for cultivating the amenities of life by the masters. Rarely has there been so brilliant, so independent, so proud a commonwealth, and yet withal so cordial, so unaffected, so democratic. If the negro labored that this society might thrive and flower, he labored also that it might be kept pure and unmixed from all incursions of foreign thought and activity.

The effect was brought about quite simply. The negro race furnished a free, unskilled labor, which could never be brought to a degree of efficiency capable of operating complicated manufactories. And yet the possession of these slaves prevented their masters from drawing into the South skilled foreign labor. Why should they engage in manufacturing? The slaves furnished an abundance as they went singing about their simple plantation tasks. There were no snarled and complicated labor problems to be solved as long as the labor used was slave labor. Indeed there was every incentive to avoid using outside labor, and every incentive to foster the institution of slavery.

And further, the very presence of the slaves created such social conditions as to rebuff any attempt of foreigners to introduce hired labor. Such immigrant workmen would not be granted social recognition, but would be classed as little better than the slaves themselves. And thus the country was set apart; and thus a unified national spirit grew into strength and marched boldly forward.

Perhaps no one ever doubted the Southrons were a passionate, impulsive people, any more than one should doubt them to be a brave, proud, generous people. Yet it is no simple thing to prove them touched with passion. It is hard to lay a finger on this thing or that thing in the life of a nation, and say, this is passion and that is not. It is much a matter of hearsay, of reputation. In fact, passion and impulse are not such entities as are owned or lacked, but rather a matter of comparison. Every people have the qualities to a greater or less degree. We believe, and current opinion upholds us in our belief, that the South is rather largely endowed with these particular traits.

From this brief analysis of the conditions under which a people must be placed, and the characteristics they must possess to produce a distinctive literature; and from the condition and the spirit of the South; it seems that the South possesses the exact qualifications for producing a distinctive national literature. It has both a strong, well defined, national spirit, and a vigorous impulsiveness to write out its message.

A brief inspection of Southern verse will serve to show that this fortunate concurrence of circumstances has not been fruitless; it will show that a national literature has indeed been produced, a literature that expresses the South and the South alone, a literature that could not have been written by another people, or at another place.

It would be a pleasure to present to the reader a selection of Southern songs, copious enough, and wide enough to fully illustrate our position. This is impossible. We may only quote a few excerpts here and there through a long roll of authors. But we believe even this very meager culling will show, in some sort, that strong unity of feeling, that similarity of sentiment, which binds Southern bards in one distinct group of singers, which makes Southern poetry, the coherent expression of one people, and thus forms a genuine national literature.

TO HELEN

Helen, thy beauty is to me
 Like those Nicean barks of yore,
 That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
 The weary, wayworn wanderer bore,
 To his own native shore.

—*E. A. Poe.*

A COMMON THOUGHT

Somewhere on this earthly planet,
 In the dust of flowers to be,
 In the dew drop, in the sunshine,
 Sleeps a solemn day for me.

* * * *

In a dim and murky chamber,
 I am breathing life away;
 Some one draws a curtain softly,
 And I watch a broadening day.

MARSH SONG.

Over the monstrous shambling sea,
Over the Caliban sea.
Bright Ariel cloud thou lingerest
Oh wait! Oh wait! in thy warm red West.
Thy Prospero, I'll be.

—*Sidney Lanier.*

As it purples in the zenith,
As it lightens on the lawn,
There's a hush of death about me,
And a whisper, "He is gone."
—*Henry Timrod.*

THE SOLITARY LAKE

The lake, a vaporous vision gleams,
So vaguely light, my fancy deems
'Tis but an airy lake of dreams.

Dream like, in curves of palest gold,
The wavering mist wreaths manifold
Part in long rifts, through which I view
Gray islets, throned in tides of blue.
—*Paul Hamilton Hayne.*

MIGNON

Across the gloom the gray morn steals
To taste the midnight brew,
The drowsy lilies tell their beads,
On rosaries of dew.
The stars seem kind,
And e'en the wind,
Hath pity on my woe.
Ah, shall I sigh in vain, Ma Belle?
Say "No." Mignon, say, "No."
—*Samuel Minturn Peck.*

RECOMPENSE

Who weeps, yet worships some sweet silent star,
E'en through his tears shall catch uplifting light,
We grow to what our aspirations are;
Look up, Oh Soul, and be a star tonight!
—*John Trotwood Moore.*

OUR TASK

I think we bind ourselves too close with clay,
 When disappointment overrides our dreams;
 We are like children, playing castle games,
 When the blocks fall
 It is not all—
 This ending. When our structure loses name,
 Beneath the ruin is many a goodly aim,
 Which, tended well, shall rear our lordly hall.

—*Alfred Battle Bealle.*

Even through these isolated bits, the reader may catch the broad similarity which pervades Southern verse, not the similarity of plagiarism or imitation, for here we find individuality cleanly defined, but a similarity in the delicate richly colored treatment Southern poets always give their themes, no matter how widely these may chance to differ. It is the same sort of similarity, though not so pronounced, that is found in Hebraic writings. Indeed, it is the necessary similarity that constitutes the hall mark of a representative national literature.

It is upon this particular point of unity alone that we wish to insist. Far be it from our thoughts to openly say the South has produced the greatest, truest poetry of our nation. Poetry is so much a matter of individual taste that it would be presumptuous for any particular person or section to insist upon its particular dictum. But what we do say, and what we wish to iterate, is that the South, and the South alone, has achieved the requisite oneness of heart to pour forth its message in song. The North and the West still stand, vast, fruitful, but mute, not in the silence of death, but in the silence of infancy.

Not that we decry the splendid strains of Northern poets; Longfellow, Emerson, Whittier, Whitman, and others, are great poets, far greater, some may think, than our sweet interpreters of the blossomy South. But what is there between Longfellow and Emerson, between Lowell and Whitman, or between any two of them, much less all of them, that would cause any reader to say, "These are brother singers of a common land." In our minds, absolutely nothing.

Each Northern poet has spoken for himself, and in his own way, but none has spoken for the North. Lowell might have been born in Nova Zembla, Emerson in India. But tear one Southern writer away from his loved Southland, from its sunlit groves and lilting mocking birds, and lo! his inspiration dies; his song has fled.

Still, there is little to wonder at in this state of things. As we have before suggested, passion is an absolute and necessary element in founding a national verse. No deep and welding passion has ever wrought the

North into one emotional unity, and this must be present before it can be expressed. Though sweet be the individual Northern strains, there lacks the broad, harmonious concordance that must go to swell the resounding symphony of a nation.

With the South, it is otherwise. A great and terrible ordeal wrought with violent hands what would have been the labor of centuries. It seized the sympathies and sentiments of the Southern people at whitest heat, and moulded them into one unchangeable shape. It brought a great sorrow and a glorious struggle into her inmost life, that will ever be the tuneful inspiration of her sons. No wonder, then, that the South came first unto her own. No wonder she turns with pride unto the listening nations and says of her poets, "These are my beloved sons, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye them."

THE GERMAN FAIRYTALE CONTEST*

BY MAX BRATT

ABOUT two years ago *Collier's Weekly* conducted a short story contest to which no less than eleven thousand authors contributed twelve thousand stories. Although writers of national reputation participated, a young Harvard graduate, who was practically unknown to the literary world, was awarded the first prize of five thousand dollars. In the light of these facts it is interesting to note that 'Die Woche,' a weekly magazine published in Berlin, held a fairy tale contest last year and singled out, from among four thousand and twenty-five contributions, the production of a longshoreman, living in Flensburg, Sleswick, as worthy of the first prize, three thousand marks. This writer, too, was competing with men and women whose names appear frequently in periodical literature. As both the short story and the fairy tale were deservedly awarded first place, these contests ought to serve as an encouragement to young or inexperienced writers.

Thirty of the best fairy tales which were submitted to the judges of the German contest have recently appeared in book form under the title of '*Neuer Deutscher Marchenschatz*.' It is a quarto volume of one hundred and ninety pages, and is profusely, at times beautifully, illustrated with colored pictures and vignettes. Some of the fairy tales are of real literary merit and will serve no doubt to enrich our stock of this kind of literature, while most of them have a mere ephemeral value. Why some

**Neuer deutscher Marchenschatz*. August School-Berlin, 1905, pp. VIII, 190,

of the latter should have been included in a collection of fairy tales, seems difficult of explanation, inasmuch as they are not 'Märchen' at all in the usual acceptation of the word. But perhaps the meaning of the term fairy tale can be extended *ad libitum*, provided the word exists at all in the English language. Neither Webster's International Dictionary nor the Century Dictionary records it.

We are interested, at present, however, not in the definition of the word fairy tale, but in the collection before us, and especially in the 'Preismärchen.' This, as already stated, was written by a man without any literary training, the best proof of which is the fact that he tells it in his native dialect, in a simple and straightforward way, and often with a humorous turn, full of homely philosophy. Much is of necessity lost in retelling it briefly and in English, but the reader may want to know what the nature of it is. The story runs, then, as follows:

Once upon a time there were two kings, Hanskönig and Klaskönig, who had always been good friends until a daughter was born to the former and a son to the latter. Then at the christening feast Klaskönig boasted of the fact that he had a crown prince and his friend only a girl, whereupon Hanskönig became wroth and declared war upon him. In a short time, Klaskönig, who was weaker, was driven from his kingdom, with his wife and his little son Eric, and to eke out an existence became a broom-maker. He retained, however, upon the advice of his wife, his crown and sceptre, that he might some day bequeath them to his son. As Eric grew older he helped his father gathering heather for the making of brooms, and the fairy of the heath, who had taken a fancy to Eric, saw to it that there was always plenty for him to cut.

While he was thus approaching his twentieth year, the daughter of Hanskönig, Erica, was developing into a beautiful princess. She was very fond of flowers, and the court ladies brought her all varieties except heather, which was tabooed by her father, and for this reason, some one had once prophesied that his daughter would marry a broom-maker, and as brooms are made of heather, he never wished to see the heathflowers in his house.

Now it happened one day that Erica was driving in the country where Eric and his parents were living, and that Eric was returning from market with one broom unsold. On this broom there were some flowers still visible, and as they had been picked where the heath fairy was wont to be they were especially attractive. Erica wanted to buy them, but Eric would take in exchange only a kiss. After a few moments of hesitation, the bargain was made.

But Eric, upon his return home, was, contrary to his custom, quiet and meditative, for he was always thinking of the beautiful lady he had met, and the kiss she had given him. In order to divert his thoughts,

his father sent him out to cut more heather. But when he reached the heath, the grasshoppers and the birds called out, 'Cut at the right time, the right time!' And so, upon the advice of his father, Eric went out again early the next morning, when the dew was still upon the heath, and lo, and behold! the sun and the moon had changed the dewdrops of the heather into pearls and diamonds.

Now, Erica's father wanted a son-in-law, who would relieve him of his duties, and therefore appointed a day on which all the unmarried princes were to assemble so that his daughter might choose her future consort. Erica, thinking of the young broom-maker, and wishing he were a prince, said that she would marry the one who would bring her the most beautiful flowers. Eric's father heard of this meeting, and as he feared that his son would ever be thinking of the lady he had met, and as he surmised that she was Erica, he advised Eric to take to the palace a bunch of the heather, with diamonds and pearls on it, and he put into Eric's sack his own hat and stick (that is, his crown and scepter). Eric's only wish was that the princess might be the same lady who had kissed him.

Many suitors arrived at the palace in the course of the day, but their flowers did not find favor in Erica's eyes. Finally, towards evening, Eric approached the palace gate; the guards, however, would not admit him, as he did not seem to have the royal insignia. Thereupon he drew forth the hat and stick that his father had given him, and forthwith the guards made way for him. As soon as Erica saw him she recognized the erstwhile broom-maker, and at once told her father that the right prince had come, and that his were the most beautiful flowers. Her father recognized the crown of his former friend, Klaskönig, asked the young man whether his name was Eric, and decided forthwith that his daughter should marry him, and none other. He felt that he had wronged his old friend, and was desirous of renewing his friendship through young Eric.

The next morning the prince and the princess drove to Eric's home to take his parents to the royal palace. On their way they passed the place where the heath fairy was wont to be. She said to them that inasmuch as the heather had brought about this happy union and reconciliation, and as Erica liked this flower above all others, the heather flower was to be called hereafter Erica.

And at the wedding feast Hanskönig said to Klaskönig: 'So, ik will dat Regêr'n nu angeben un will Erich dat öwerlaten. Denn giff du din Bessenbinn'n nu uk man an. Dann gaht wi beid in't Ol'ndêl sitten und spelt wedder uns' Söszunsösztî. Un uns' Fruns, secht he, de kunnt sik denn 'n god Tasz Kaffi kaken un vor uns 'n Glas Grog.'

What Hanskönig said was done. And if they have not finished the last round of cards, they are playing still.

Much of the charm of 'Erica' is due, no doubt, to its simple style

and dialectic language. The second 'Preismarchen,' on the other hand, was selected for award probably because of its unusual motif. A carpenter, who has done a favor to a wood sprite, is promised unexpectedly the fulfillment of any wish that he may have. As his wife is a kind but rather untidy woman, and he, in consequence, has always difficulty in finding his belongings, he wishes that he might live in a glass house. When upon his return home he perceives that his wish has been granted, he feels chagrined, for now all the passersby can look into every corner and cranny and see the untidiness of the household. With a brave heart he sets to work and cleans and clears up everything in the house, and then resumes his shop-work. But now all the people can see, as they pass by, what an excellent carpenter he is, and orders come thick and fast. At last a feeling of shame comes over his wife, that her husband is keeping the house in order and plying his trade as well, and realizing that they will have to live always in a glass house, she rises the next morning before daybreak and performs her household duties conscientiously. Her husband is beside himself with joy when seeing this reformation in her, and hereafter the couple live happily together.

There is hardly any room for doubt that the two foregoing tales well merit their awards; they certainly are superior to all others in the collection. But the reviewer cannot agree with the decision of the judges as regards the third prize tale, 'Der Kasperl.' This story is by far one of the poorest in the volume, and is without question surpassed by such tales as '*Die Wunderbrille*' or '*Schattendoff*.' Even though there may be not more than a half a dozen 'Märchen' of real literary merit among the thousands that were submitted, yet the contest seems to have been worth while, if for no other reason than for calling forth the charming Preismärchen, 'Erica.'

SHAKESPEARE'S CLOWNERY

BY CHARLES W. HODELL

THE revival of interest in the life and works of Shakespeare at the opening of the Twentieth Century has been notable. And the nature of recent Shakespearian criticism shows that there is a reigning style, almost as surely as there is in matters of dress or ornament. Twenty years ago almost every book in this department was abuzz with the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. It is the proof of a far healthier mind today that this unsightly rubbish has been relegated to its limbo, and that a new endeavor is moving the Shakespearians.

There is a growing consciousness that the greatest work of Shakespeare is his art, that the highest critical endeavor is to comprehend that art as a whole, to understand the relations of the plays to one another, and to trace in their completed succession the unfolding of one marvelous, myriad-minded genius.

Criticism has also come to understand that Shakespeare himself grew in mental and moral depth and mass, that he developed his art of play-writing, from comparatively unskilful beginnings. He did not spring full-armed from the heads of the muses, but first grew along one line of development and then along another, until finally the wondrous symmetry of his being was completed. Today the critic searches to find the great Shakespeare rising behind his Bottom and Falconbridge, his Hamlet and Desdemona, his Portia and Prospero. He would comprehend not the individuals of this imaginary world, but the great soul which exercised the wizard imagination in its countless creations. Is the series of characters a disconnected list of individuals, or is it a psychic organism, a consistent and developing comprehension of human life as seen through one pair of eyes? Surely it is not by chance that Iago and Edmund were created side by side, nor that we have the witty triad of Beatrice, Rosalind and Viola in three years of creative work, nor that we see later a sweet sisterhood in Marina, Perdita, and Miranda. But such evidences of the one creative soul are found not only in the characters, but in the choice of stories, and even more in the moods of the artist in his work. The unity of a single personality pervades and directs the whole range of Shakespeare's work, and the great task before the Shakespearian critic today is to discover this personality.

One manifestation of this great informing personality is to be found in the use of clownery in the plays. And by clownery we mean not merely the clodpoles and feeble-minded, but the whole range of broadly humorous characters, created for the entertainment of the audiences of that day. There are even knights, schoolmasters, and parsons in their rank. But they are all either witty themselves or the occasion of wit in others. Nor are they needed for the development of the romantic story, but their merry jests or blundering foolery are light wings of mirth which help to buoy the play in air.

The use of such characters had long been known to English playwrights. Even the writers of the old miracle plays understood the value of a Cain in the garb of a ridiculous, cursing, Yorkshire rustic, of the shrewish Mrs. Noah, and of an uproarious Herod. The moralities also had their laughable devil, who under his varied aliases, as time went on, became the chief personage of the drama. The earliest plays for the public stage in turn adopted this same device for holding the ignorant mob. All Shakespeare's immediate predecessors except Marlowe had used clownery freely, and even Marlowe had comic stuff foisted on him later. But Shakespeare rises above all his predecessors in his use of clownery, as in all other aspects of his art. What with them had been a somewhat forced and inartistic adjunct, a sop to the mob, became an integral part of his work. In it, one great vein of his nature found expression. His perennial fun which was as essential a part of him as his searching ethical curiosity, spoke through these clowns. He was reading here one of the most interesting pages of human nature, and he knew how to make his discovery of truth in knave and fool alike, a part of the great life drama which was being played on the stage of the world. We turn then to see how Shakespeare manifested this side of nature in his works.

The chronological order as determined by Prof. Edward Dowden is taken without further proof as approximately correct. We may arrange the plays according to this order and choose from their *dramatis personae* the clowns. As the eye runs over the list, it sees interesting correspondences and groupings, but the most interesting fact lies in the exuberance of the clownery from 1597 to 1601, from Falstaff to Feste. This short period includes far more and far richer clownery than all the rest of Shakespeare's artistic career.

To fully comprehend this outburst of fun we should turn first to the work that lies before Falstaff. With the abundant foolery in the

works of Greene, Peele, and others, Shakespeare certainly did not lack for models if he needed them in his earliest years. Yet when he set himself to this sort of work in his first comedy of 'Love's Labour's Lost,' he followed none of them. His laugh rings freshly. He burlesques goodnaturedly the don, the curate, and the pedant, and sets over against them as foils the shrewd, untutored rusticity of Costard. There is a genuine spontaneous humor of a laughter-loving nature. It is the work of a young man. Yet when we look beyond this auspicious opening of his humorous vein, we are impressed with the meagerness of its use in the subsequent plays of this early period. We may put aside the 'Comedie of Errors,' as a less significant effort in another line, an experiment that was not followed up. And after it, in the next six years, we find only Launce and Speed, Launcelot Gobbo, Bottom the weaver, and Juliets nurse. And not one of these, not even Bottom, can be said to stand out dominantly in his own play. They appear as diverting episodes from the main romantic story. And the main romantic story itself in 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona,' 'Midsomer Nights Dreame,' 'Romeo and Juliet,' and 'The Merchant of Venice,' are markedly devoid of humor, as compared with those of the next period. The histories likewise down to 'King John' are uniformly serious, and even the ironic breeziness of Falconbridge cannot dispel the gloom of 'King John.' The more we study the plays of this period, the more we are led to believe that Shakespeare had not yet learned to trust his humor as an essential element in his creative nature. We do not doubt that humor was in his heart. He must have laughed a good ringing laugh in the joy of his repeated successes, and we feel sure that he was born with a laugh in his heart. It was part of the truth of him. But he needed some assurance as to the utility of his humor in art. He was studying his audience and its demands. He was indeed developing his own theory of art with the unconsciousness of a great artist, but he had also the business consciousness of a practical manager. In the face of the dramatic canons of the more scholarly and in the face of the utterance of Marlowe, the only playwright of that time whom he could regard as an equal, he must needs assure himself that he was right before using humor freely. But his fame and self-confidence were growing rapidly, until at last the long pent-up waters of fun broke over in the character of Falstaff.

Falstaff stands as a landmark in the growth of Shakespeare's mind and art. He is a *tour-de-force* of humor. All the artist's wit, all his love of fun, are spent on the fat knight. The serious affairs of King

Henry become a side issue and even Prince Hal is but a satellite of Sir John in the eyes of an interested audience. He fills the stage with more than his ponderous weight. The dramatic fortune of the play is staked on his character. And Shakespeare has at last confidently challenged his audiences to boundless laughter, in spite of stage decorum.

There can be no doubt of the immediate theatrical success of the play. Popular approval in a roll of applause drowned out all criticism that might have been offered. Criticism itself was struck dumb by the colossal genius of the work. The admission-paying public crowded the theatres and hailed with delight the continuance of Sir John's character in the second part of the play. The Queen, if tradition be true, was so pleased that she gave a special commission to Shakespeare which resulted in *Merry Wives of Windsor*. The printers, too, stole the play that they might share profits in its popularity. More editions of it were published in Shakespeare's life than of any other of his plays. Everything points to its sweeping success, before the public for whom it was written.

If Shakespeare had been hesitating to use humor freely, he need do so no longer. The world was with him. He could pour out the abundant mirth of his own nature, and not fail of an audience. To this emancipation of his fun is due, perhaps, the abundance and richness of the clownery, the humor of every kind, in the next five years. We have here the high tide of happy laughter that has risen o'er the world in literature. Mirth-moving characters in rich variety come fresh minted from his brain with almost the careless profusion of nature herself. Falstaff, Bardolph, and Dame Quickly are followed by Justice Shallow and Silence; Sir Hugh Evans, Dr. Caius, and Slender; an immortal British triad in Fluellen, Macmonis and Jamy, making mirth for their English sovereign; Dogberry and Verges administering the laws; Touchstone and Feste, personating the licensed fool; and Sir Andrew and Sir Toby with the little minx Maria playing their practical jokes. No play is complete now without some of this company. Nor is the clownery any longer contented with an episodic importance; their figures thrust themselves into the very midst of the play, and draw the attention largely to their own ridiculous self-importance. The affairs of love, of romance, and of serious history must alike make space for the humorist. And the glad abandon of Shakespeare is evidenced by the fact that we too, his sympathetic readers, are so satisfied with their clownery that we scarcely wish to look beyond it.

But in the creation of this clownery we see only a part of Shakespeare's fun-loving nature; for the contagion of the laugh has spread to the very heart of the main stories. The lovers' perplexities and even the fighting and wooing of King Hal are steeped in fun. Falstaff had done more than introduce the immortal company of the clownery; he had inspired the healthy, joyous laugh of young life, the care-free sunshine of youth. His lovers are no longer serious because true love fails to run smooth, as were Proteus and Julia, or Lysander and Hermia; but they play pleasant pranks in love, they thrust and parry with wit, they contrive practical jokes, they woo and win with a jest and a laugh. Troubles are but the troubles of dreamland which pass as do the clouds in a bright summer sky. True love will always run smooth in the end. The world is running over with joy. This spirit manifests itself alike in the uproarious farce of Katherine and Petrucio, in the witty love-makings of Beatrice and Rosalind, and in the refined graciousness of Viola's romance. The sunshine of Shakespeare's nature is warm and life giving; it is the healthy outdoors of the glad springtime. A little thunder shower now and then only makes the air the sweeter. As we are happy in this life, we ask why must it pass away? Why cannot Shakespeare be ever young, and continue in endless succession his pictures of rich clownery and witty love making.

It is a commonplace of criticism, however, that a great change does come over Shakespeare's spirit at the end of the five years of mirth. The tinge of melancholy in 'Twelfth Night' is a prophecy of this change. We cannot enter into a discussion of the external causes that might have helped to bring about the change. But we do wish to mark its effect on this fun-loving side of Shakespeare's nature; for great as was his love of fun, this was but a facet of his nature. After the year 1601, the exuberant mirth is gone. Three of the plays which follow very soon, attempt to portray love romances. But glad, young love is gone out of 'All's Well that Ends Well,' 'Measure for Measure,' and 'Troilus and Cressida.' Lust and crime have darkened the sky. Instead of the wanton, witty heroines, the chaste lilylike nature of Isabella blooms in a Vienna reeking with the vileness of its stews. No wit-parryings nor practical jokings brighten the world. Troubles are no longer the passing summer clouds; they are the thickening gloom of winter storms.

But the utterness of the change is fully as well seen in the clownery of the plays. Parolles, Pompey, and Thersites are counterparts of the clownery in the plays of the preceding period, but how changed is the attitude

of the author toward them. Instead of the utter enjoyment we had in the colossal rogueries of Falstaff, we have the corresponding rogueries, no longer laughable, but despicable in the person of Parolles: the mean braggart excites our utter contempt; the laugh at him is bitter with scorn. In 'Measure for Measure,' instead of a Sir Toby and his company, we have vulgar jests of pimp and pander, of drunken ruffian, and brutal executioner. They are a grim and awful comment of the depths of human depravity. Shakespeare evidently had no joy in them, but reported them as a part of the great world of sin which was coming home to his consciousness, more and more strongly. We hope the laugh did not utterly go out of his life, but it certainly is hushed in the sight of the hateful debauchery of a corrupted world. In Thersites also we again have a bitter, ironic jest at the life around him. Youth's young joy is far away now. This marked change toward the secondary folk of his drama is one of the most significant features of the change in Shakespeare's soul about the year 1601.

In the years of tragedy which follow, clownery becomes a very minor adjunct. In the grave-digger, in Macbeth's porter, in Iago's merry making, we have humor; but it is not so much an overflowing gladness, as a foil to the great tragedy of the breaking heart of man. There is not the thought of a laugh in them. They raise but the ghost of dead laughter. They rather increase by contrast the thick gloom of sin and sorrow.

From this gloom, the lover of Shakespeare will turn the eye of hope to that mild Indian summer of his latest years. Will a smile ever again brighten Shakespeare's face, will mirth ever again become his very element? Will he never take a spontaneous joy in the clownery of life? We find the answer in the character of Autolycus. Again for a moment the grave face of middle age brightens beyond its usual philosophic calm. He laughs at the thieving, merry-hearted pedlar; again he is almost carefree. And this note, once so strong, and later so completely lost, is added to the full-blown harmony of the closing strains of Shakespeare's artistic life.

In all these changes of Shakespeare's power over the fun-loving element, we read, perhaps, a great critical truth. Humor is not a professional attempt to be funny. Such professional humor has been nauseatingly abundant with us of late. But true humor is a perennial warmth in the human heart, a vital attitude toward human life. And even Shakespeare could not command his moods and be funny. His never-dying laughter rings through his works only when the laugh lay deep in his soul.

LIFE AND LETTERS

MR. HENRY NEHEMIAH DODGE has hit upon a great theme in his new poetic cycle 'Mystery of the West.' It is only a few years since his admirable poem 'Christus Victor' drew about him a large circle of warm admirers. Now he comes before a public, sure to be still larger, with a volume of more distinctly national significance.

This conception of this poetic cycle is undoubtedly fine, and the general plan of its execution well thought out and artistic, and if the form of expression does not always attain a splendor equal to the theme, we are nevertheless carried through the book with constantly increasing interest.

The first poem describes the vastness of the cold of the Polar Night. This is followed by the tale of 'Leif Eriksson.' 'The Budding of Ygdrasil' gives a mythical turn to the thought best shown by quotation.

Silence, O sea-gods, be silent and listen—
Vain all your storming, vain all your clamor!
Listen! I hear, through the ravings of Ocean
Sounding a ghostly, a mystical murmur—
Ygdrasil maketh his leaves all to quiver,
Ygdrasil holy, vast Tree of Existence,
Standing deep-rooted in Death's dark abysses,
Deep in the gloom of the Kingdom of Hela.
There is dread silence around the great Ash Tree.

Quickening his gnarled roots, now and forever,
With the deep Sacred Well's life-giving waters,
Sit the three Nornas—grim Fates—ever spinning,
Spinning the Present, the Past and the Future.

High rears the Ash Tree his proud head undying,
The races his branches, his boughs are the nations,
Under his vast spread the whole world is sheltered—
All the world's life through his mystic leaves rustling,

Balder the beautiful, Balder the White God,
Hurt by the mistletoe, wounded and dying,
Shed a warm tear of compassion for all men,
Wept on the roots of the Ash Tree, and forthwith
Trembled an impulse, a thrilling, a budding!

Lo, from his vastness a new bough is breaking—
 Silence, ye sea-gods and offer your homage!—
 Erelong this branch, lusty, budding, will blossom,
 Giant in embryo, masterful, valiant
 Growing, outspreading to distant climes, reaching
 Overland, oversea on to a New World.
 Under its shelter shall gather the peoples,
 Hope of all human-kind, Foe of oppressors,
 Fairest of Ygdrasil's branches, fruit-laden,
 Healing the nations with Light and with Freedom.

Then follows a poem—one of the best in the volume for evenness in workmanship and charming in idea 'Too Soon the Light!'

'Blow. night winds, blow your kindly, mystic veil
 Athwart the rift made by the Norseman's prow;
 Let Vineland slumber yet awhile in peace,
 Lulled by her guardian ocean's melodies.
 Hide once again this earthly paradise,
 Whose waters flow unvexed, whose limpid streams
 Leap in sweet Freedom's haunts, where fearless drink
 All her wild creatures, in her love secure;
 Whose forest wilds, untouched by the woodman's axe,
 In their primeval glory undefiled,
 Murmur their joy unto caressing winds.
 Too soon the light! The world is moving slow;
 These shores be for its riper heritage.'

The poem following this, 'Rumors,' suggests Whitman and is very effective.

'Rumors of mystic lands sought by the Basque, sought
 by bold seamen from Africa
 Rumors wild, formless, wraiths of the night-wrack
 of ocean
 Rumors of lands to the westward.'

Scenes in the history of Columbus are next portrayed. There is an impressive chant for the 'Children of mystery' (the Indian tribes) and a final division, 'Coming of the Nations' which includes. Freedom Enthroned,' 'A Warning Voice' and songs of the different nations that have found a home in America,—rounded up at the end with 'Freedom's Song of Welcome.'

Did the fire of great genius burn in Mr. Dodge's veins this would

have been a truly remarkable and epoch making cycle of poems, and even as it is—a work of talent—it is inspiring, makes one feel the better for having read it, and presents a view of America, its mission and destiny which it would be well to instil into the minds of the youth of the nation. We should like to see the book adopted in the schools as an inspirer of a healthy and uplifting patriotism. (The Gorham Press, 1906.)

* * *

THE popular hit of the hour is J. W. Barrie's 'Peter Pan,' yet those who manage to retain their individual power of judgment against the obsession of the multitude will find the impression made upon them by the play not so altogether satisfactory and inspiring as they had been led to suppose it would be. There is a strange mixture in it of charm and something that is not charm, at first very puzzling. There are elements in it which are not ideal, yet how to put one's finger upon them!

Gradually there emerges the conviction that the flaws are partly artistic, partly ethical. If we imagine the play written by a child there are sophistications in it which could not possibly enter the mind of a child. If we imagine it written by a grown person there are childish naïvetés which would be innocent enough if the childlike point of view were steadily maintained, but which, under the circumstances, become innuendoes that do not strike an absolutely pure note. This mixing up of two points of view is more a flaw in artistic construction than a flaw *per se* in the ethics of the play, yet the effect is at times unpleasant ethically. One has a curious mixture of feeling until this—the real root of the difficulty as we think, is discovered.

Whether the play be taken from the child's point of view or from a grown-up point of view, the first scene presents a picture of domesticity that we wonder parents like to have their children see. An irascible idiot for a father and an amiable idiot for a mother, and anything but a refined and peaceful scene in the nursery strikes so unpleasant a note in the start that the charming scene following in which the children learn from Peter Pan how to fly hardly blots out the impression. We can imagine children wanting to get away from such an environment, but we can't imagine their wanting to come back as the children in this play do, especially after the fascinating sojourn among the little boys in the 'Never, Never, Land,' and their exciting adventures with pirates. These are the portions of the play full of child-like inspiration and charm.

* * *

PETER PAN, himself, the boy who went to live with the fairies because he didn't want to grow up and become president of the United States, is not an entirely unified conception.

He isn't always quite so boyish as he ought to be, and we feel sorry that he did not choose as his little fairy friend a more lovable creature than

Tinker Bell seemed to be with her jealous tantrums over Wendy, his little human friend.

PERHAPS it is because our modern minds have become tainted by problem plays, but we have a haunting feeling all the time that the basic philosophy of the play is not good, that there is some happy medium ground between the ambition to be president and the throwing off of all responsibility in life. We certainly believe in fairies and we should not like sermonizing fairies but couldn't there be fairies who would throw a glamour over life and bring out its beauty rather than fairies who repudiate the earth with its flowers for the tree-tops?

* * *

THE Music Lovers' Calendar has just appeared for this year. It is full of exceedingly interesting reading matter embellished by a number of fine portraits of distinguished musicians.

The subject of American Music is very much to the fore, being discussed in two articles, one by Edgar Stillman Kelley and one by Arthur Farwell. Their respective points of view will best be given by quotations. Mr. Kelley writes upon the Teutonic element in American Music. He says:

'In a sense the works of Chopin, Bizet, Grieg and Tschaikowski are Teutonic in spite of their local coloring, for behind them all we are conscious of the influences of Bach and Beethoven. This Germanic element in music is as necessary to work of the first type as is the classical quality in statuary, architecture and the drama. When we compare the interminable plays of the Chinese with those of the Greek poets, we can understand the enthusiasm for the three unities.'

'If we compare the music of the Arabs, Chinese, and other Orientals, or even that of Mediaeval Europe with the musical masterpieces of the 18th and 19th centuries, we shall realize the debt we owe the Teutonic composers who, like the classic sculptors and dramatists brought the crude elements to such a focus of beauty and symmetry that the result was art.' We have the German musical temperament in America. We likewise find an unusual manifestation of the Saxon spirit of freedom. The latter, in its exaggerated phases, tends to overthrow all rules and conventions. But true freedom involves compliance with the laws of art and society.

* * *

'SUCH application of the laws of music to the incidents of American life may rightly be called "American Music." The term may also be applied to the works of American composers who have utilized the themes of such foreign races as have immigrated to our shores,—the Africans, the Chinese, etc. And especially will it fit the treatment of our native Indian melodies. These efforts belong to the order of picturesque or dramatic music.

'BUT, when the American comes to the creation of the so-called abstract or absolute music, what then? Rather than attempt anything so comprehensive and complicated as the voicing of a multi-racial conglomerate of emotions, it seems far more logical, practical, and conducive to individuality for the native American to devote himself to the expression of his European heritage as modified by the new conditions.'

* * *

IN admitting that Art (in its exclusive sense) has in its past history come under the sway of two fundamental principles so different as the Classic principle and the Teutonic principle, Mr. Kelley it seems to us opens out a possibility of some third principle of art differing from both of these as much as these differ from each other; and nowhere would such a development be so likely to come to pass as in America where the racial complexity and the political ideal must act and interact for the bringing forth of larger national ideals than were dreamed of by the Greek or the Teuton. Out of such conditions and necessities it would not be astonishing if one fine day in the far distant future, the critics will discourse upon the three great principles in the development of art, the Classic, the Teutonic and the American.

* * *

ARTHUR FARWELL also has an article upon American music in which he takes firm ground on behalf of a national music and points out clearly the necessary path of its evolution with arguments broad and convincing. He says: 'We are, then, to look for many styles, many colors, many varied manifestations of spirit and matter, in American music. But diversity, however great, in any respect, cannot prevent it from being representative of the American nation, so long as it is felt to bear the same relation to the music of other nations that the spirit which brought this nation to birth bears to the spirit animating other nations.'

* * *

'PRINCIPLE is the first question in our national music to-day; the question of style is secondary. Our composers owe it to their countrymen to take thought of the new meaning of this nation among nations, and to examine their work in the light of that meaning. Their responsibility to the American people is identical in force with that of the authors of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, in the respective spheres of artistic and democratic evolution. Both are spiritual matters at base, and are closely related. A national music is to a nation what a song is to the singer who conceives it, a trustworthy expression of the quality and strength of his spirit.'

* * *

'To learn that the spirit animating nationality may be a primal and irresistible force in literature, we need but read the writings of Abraham

Lincoln. It is not common patriotism, but genius of nationality which accomplishes such results. While the true American composer will not, to quote the not infrequently pertinent phrase of Mr. Philip Hale "cover mediocrity with a cloak of patriotism," neither will he cover barrenness of nationality with a cloak of pretended universality. He will simply sing, and if he shall truly have inherited the spirit of the makers of his nation, his song will sooner or later find its place in our national music.'

* * *

THE CRITIC in speaking of Bliss Carman's collected works, recently published under the title "Pipes of Pan" very cleverly puts its finger upon the weak points of this illusive and fascinating yet disappointing poet. It says:

'The title is both explanation and apology. Poor Pan who had no soul! It is the chief fault of this fluent and often charming verse that it, too, is singularly soulless.

'If you ask me what soul is, in poetry, I cannot clearly tell you, but I know that poetry which has it not is lifeless and without grasp on the hearts of men. There are hardly half a dozen poems in "The Pipes of Pan" which one turns to reread—and surely that is the test of a poem. It is true that the excepted half-dozen are exquisite; but why be a poet at all if you are to strike the high note so seldom in nearly seven hundred pages?

'Mr. Carman's love-lyrics are especially inadequate, for, in general, the affections they commemorate seem very temporary and perfunctory. I do not mean that a love-lyric must have the spiritual quality to appeal to the modern reader, but it must necessarily have a certain amount of depth of intensity, a touch of the magic, a glimmer of the "light that never was."

'In the section entitled "Songs of the Sea Children" there is more of this quality than elsewhere in the book, and surely this little poem is all compact of it:'

"Out of the dust that bore thee
What wonder walking came,—
What beauty like blown grasses,
What ardour like still flame?

"What patience of the mountains
What yearning of the sea,
What far, eternal impulse
Endowed the world with thee?

"A reed within the river,
A leaf upon the bough,—
What breath of April ever
Was half so dear as thou?"

'But the best thing in the volume is also the first—the poem "Overlord," beginning

' "Lord of the grass and the hill,
Lord of the rain,
White Overlord of will,
Master of pain,—

' "I, who am dust and air
Blown through the halls of death,
Like a pale ghost of prayer,—
I am Thy breath," '

* * *

MRS. CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN is to be congratulated upon her temperate attitude in her review in *The Critic* of Dr. Weininger's 'Sex and Character.' She might have been sarcastic and on the defensive, but she merely records the wise doctor's pronunciamientos upon women truly, and gently laughs.

If it were possible to turn women into egotists the spectacle of her own interest in the eyes of men would surely have done so long ago. From Hesiod down she has been the subject of insulting theories about her. Religion took up the refrain, and, latterly, science, or what calls itself science, has been striking the final blows. Dr. Weininger, a learned scientist of twenty-one, has finally disposed of her once for all. She has no consciousness, no ego, no morality, no reverence, no power to love, no longing for immortality.

* * *

THERE is one consolation in all this. It will be impossible to gain any further distinction for theories leading to the degradation of woman. No scientist need hope to make any fresh sensations in this line, and if he desires a reputation for learned research and originality, he will be obliged to discover a good quality or two in woman.

In the meantime unconscious woman watches with wonder and amusement the highly conscious conclusions of mankind in regard to her qualities.

* * *

THE pity of such books is that they do produce a perceptible influence on the young men of the community. Six editions in Germany, and a translation in America! Let all women prepare to be at least patronized by every particularly brainless youth they meet. H. A. C.

* * *

THE following interesting interpretation of a passage much com-

mented upon reaches us from a correspondent who refers to the edition of Shakespeare edited by the editors of this magazine :

"It is with pleasure that I have begun to read your edition of the First Folio Macbeth, and I am so glad you so often come to the defence of the original readings. I am quite without reference books here in this libraryless town, save the Encyclopædia Britannica (ninth edition); as a consequence I am not well equipped for a study of Shakespeare, and so I do not know whether a slight interpretation I have to offer has been made before or not.

Act I, sec. II, ll 31-34 reads :

"As whence the Sunne 'gins his reflection,	31
Shipwracking storms, and direful thunders;	32
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,	33
Discomfort swells"	34

In your note on p. 121 you seem to approve Singer's interpretation (equinox and equinoctial storms); and it is a good one, but does not seem to me to fulfill all the conditions. (1) *Whence* instead of *when* is necessary in l. 31 to correspond with *from that spring* in l. 33; yet if *reflection* refers to the equinoctial turning of the sun, the use of *whence* (instead of *when*) seems strained; *whence*, referring to *time* as source, is awkward; *whence*, referring to *place* as source, would be expected. (2) If *reflection* refers to the equinox, how can *comfort* seem to have come from it? If you say *comfort* was not meant to apply to *reflection*, then the phrase *whence comfort seemed to come* applies only to the second half of the comparison and the comparison is in so far defective. Both these objections are avoided if *whence the sun 'gins his reflection* is the east; for then (1) *whence* refers to *place* as source, its natural use, and (2) *whence comfort seem'd to come* then applies also to the first half of the comparison, the sun having risen in the morning but being quenched later in the gathering storm; cf Encycl. Brit. xvi., 129, where it says that in the east and south of Scotland thunder with heavy rains is of most frequent occurrence, during the summer from May to September, from 11 a. m. to 5 p. m. As to storms arising from the east, i.e., the North Sea (l. 32), see also Encycl. Brit. xvi., 154, paragraph Storms (art. Meteorology) and figure 19 (a typical storm); also refer to your own introduction p. 18, 19, whence it would seem that the storms were brewed by witches after they had ridden out to sea in their sieves. The comparison would then seem to be perfect in all its parts: as from the east, whence the comfort of the rising sun seemed to come, whence the sun *begins* his reflection, come after all shipwrecking storms and direful thunders; so from that spring, the battlefield, whence the comfort of *victory* seemed to come, arises discomfort, the hope-wrecking Norwegian Lord, also from the east, the North Sea !

Melvin Brandon.